

REF: Response to the Boundary Commission Report CR3 (Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe) by Caterham Hill Conservative Branch.

See also: Map, page three, and Disposition of electorate calculation, page four.

From: Caterham Hill Conservative Branch July 2023, Chair Cllr Maria R. Grasso, Caterham Hill Parish Council

INTRODUCTION: The Caterham Hill Conservative Branch has reviewed the report to the Boundary Commission regarding local boundaries prepared by the Conservative Group of Tandridge District Council. We support their findings and agree that given our in-depth local knowledge of the history, the present community spirit and the area's topology, improvements can be made to the suggestions presented by the Commission.

THE COMMISSION'S SUGGESTIONS: The Boundary Commission's proposed boundaries leave an imbalance in representation in our area. Applying projected 2028 population figures, wards north of the M25 will be underrepresented, while most of those south of the M25 will be overrepresented. For example, Lingfield and Crowhurst -8%, Oxted North -8%, Portley and Whyteleafe 8%, Caterham Valley 11%. The last example is over the 10% allowance (breaking the Commission's own rules). These examples demonstrate there is a distinct imbalance across the area.

We have devised a solution which will even out this imbalance and take into account local factors described above.

REPORT INACCURACIES: There are inaccuracies in the report-which must be addressed and corrected. It states that Caterham Valley Parish comprises two wards with two councillors (four in total), but each ward has THREE councillors, totalling six altogether.

The report states incorrectly that the Valley ward is a single community. This must be corrected. The Valley comprises two distinct communities. North of Station Avenue (Valley ward) is an established urban area; South of Station Avenue (Harestone ward) is semi-rural, becoming completely rural further south.

CURRENT DISPOSITION OF WARDS: CR3 area is currently represented by 13 District Councillors across seven wards. We understand the aim is to have three-councillor wards, and for the CR3 area to have four wards with twelve councillors. However, Caterham as a whole have had the greatest increase in population in the area and reducing it to four wards will exacerbate the underrepresentation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

CHALDON, single-councillor ward: Chaldon is a distinct community in our area and is primarily rural. It views itself as a village and operates with a Village council. Since Woldingham has been accepted as a single-councillor ward to represent its community, Chaldon should also be granted this status and remain a single-councillor ward.

Warlingham West should not acquire Downsway, Maple Road and Close area as they are west of the Upper Warlingham railway line and are an established part of the Whyteleafe community. (I understand that the Warlingham West councillors concur with this view.)

CATERHAM HILL & CATERHAM VALLEY: As the names of these two areas suggest, the topology defines the communities. The Hill is sufficiently steep to separate and contain two distinct communities. To manipulate boundaries so that residents on the Hill are combined with the Valley is incongruous with the community spirit within these two individual areas having been inculcated over hundreds of years.

CATERHAM HILL includes WESTWAY, PORTLEY & QUEENS PARK wards: The three current wards on the Hill (Westway, Portley and Queens Park) can be combined into two three-councillor wards. We propose these be named Portley & Queens Park ward and Westway ward. This terminology is important as it preserves historically important names of the area.

New WESTWAY WARD, three councillors: The new Westway ward would include the current area plus a section of Portley ward to the north, losing a small portion in the south-east: dividing roads to the north include Foxon Lane, a small portion of Ninehams Road, and Hayes Lane. To the south, the ward boundary is maintained but altered at Westway and Coudon Road, which to the East, moves into the new Portley and Queens Park ward.

New PORTLEY & QUEENS PARK, three councillors: The eastern boundary for both wards is maintained. As above, the dividing roads to the north include Foxon Lane, a small portion of Ninehams Road, and Hayes Lane. To the south, the ward boundary is maintained but altered at Westway and Coudon Road, which to the East, moves into the new Portley and Queens Park ward.

CATERHAM VALLEY currently includes WHYTELEAFE, VALLEY AND HARESTONE wards, with two councillors each: These three wards, each with two councillors, should remain 'as is' since they reflect three distinct areas.

Important: The above recommendations maintain the current number of councillors (13), preserve the historical and geographical allegiances in the area, and avoid any confusion to residents by unnecessary change.

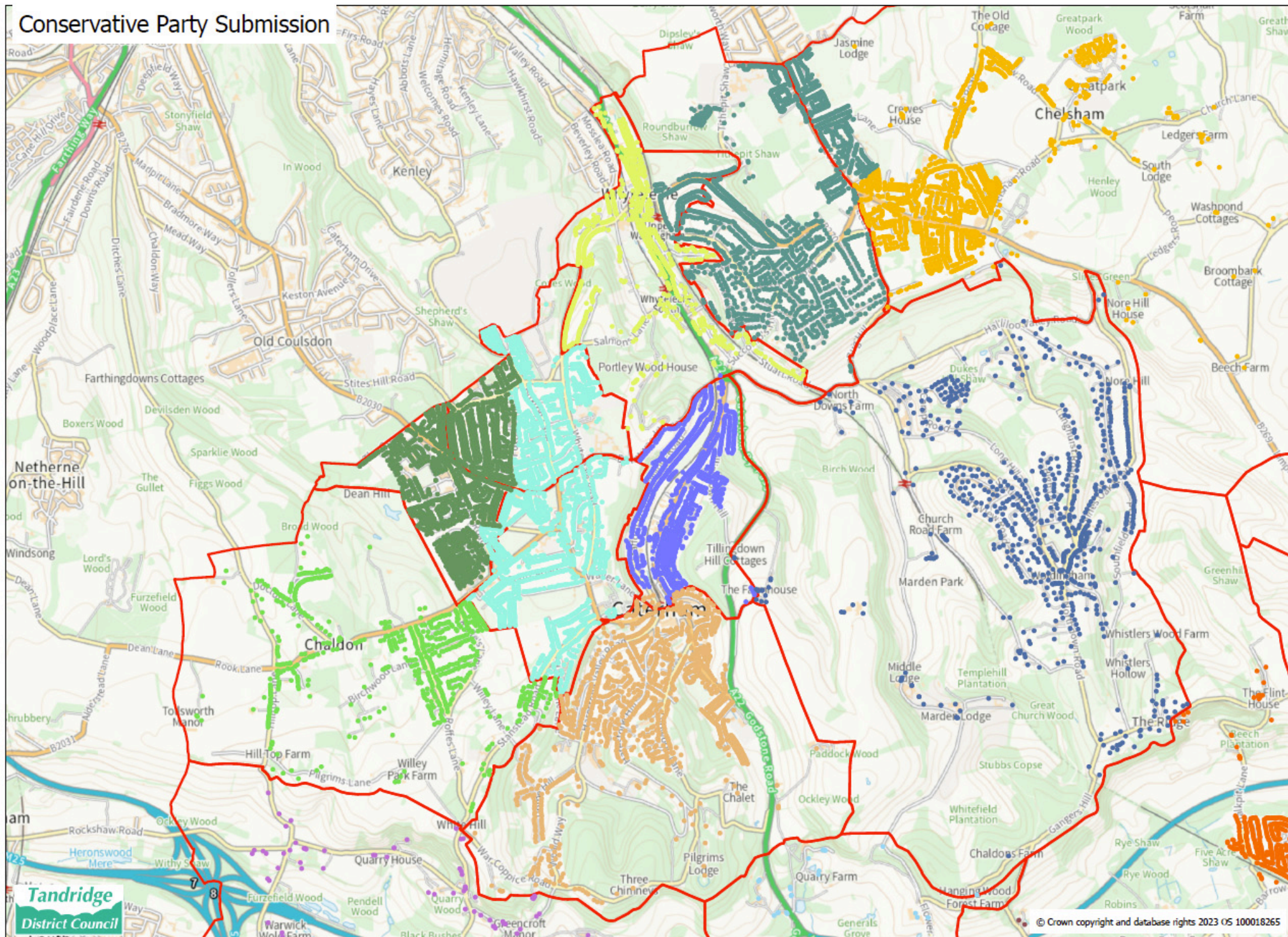
Option: Two new wards named WHYTELEAFE VALLEY and HARESTONE VALLEY wards, each with three councillors: Should the Boundary Commission require these wards to become three-councillor wards, the current Valley ward can be divided with the northern half going to Whyteleafe ward and the southern half to Harestone ward. These wards could be renamed Whyteleafe Valley and Harestone Valley.

OXTED NORTH, OXTED SOUTH and LINGFIELD WARDS: As a group, these wards are all over-represented and must be reduced to create two three-councillor wards and one two-councillor ward. This allocation will allow the necessary extra councillor for the densely populated CR3 area.

The above recommendations create better ratios of residents per councillor, thus a fairer and more democratic solution to the boundary changes. **Please see pages three and four,** the map of proposed boundaries and the related disposition of electorate (created with the assistance of Tandridge District Council's officers).

ENDS

Conservative Party Submission



Response to the Boundary Commission Report CR3
Accompanies submission by Caterham Hill Conservative Branch
Chair Cllr Maria R Grasso, July 2023

Area	Total	Seats	#/seat	Var
BLETCHINGLEY & NUTFIELD	4,866	3	1,622	97%
BURSTOW, HORNE & OUTWOOD	5,309	3	1,769	106%
GODSTONE	4,868	3	1,622	97%
LINGFIELD & CROWHURST	4,701	3	1,567	94%
OXTED NORTH & TANDRIDGE	4,993	3	1,664	100%
OXTED SOUTH	4,782	3	1,594	96%
Whyteleafe	3,187	2	1,593	95%
Caterham East	5,369	3	1,789	107%
VALLEY	3,557	2	1,778	107%
WARLINGHAM EAST, CHELSHAM & FARLEIGH	3,612	2	1,806	108%
WARLINGHAM WEST	4,534	3	1,511	91%
Caterham West	5,493	3	1,831	110%
WOLDINGHAM	1,718	1	1,718	103%
Dormansland & Felbridge	4,738	3	1,579	95%
Limpsfield & Tatsfield	4,772	3	1,590	95%
Chaldon	1,538	1	1,538	92%
Harestone	3,594	2	1,797	108%

Totals: 43

Tandridge

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Organisation Name: Caterham Hill Conservative Branch (Representative of a local organisation)

Comment text:

Dear Harry,

Thank you for taking my call today. As Parish Councillor for Caterham Hill, I have taken comments from residents concerned about the commission's proposed boundaries, particularly that they do not consider the area's communities or unique topology.

I am also Chair of the local Conservative branch, which in recent discussions echoed the same concerns. I attach our comments. With the assistance of Tandridge Officers, we have been able to rearrange the boundaries in a way that is more fitting to the area AND resolves some of the problems of underrepresentation in the area. I would be most grateful if you would forward the attached to the correct department for due consideration.

Kind regards

Maria R. Grasso

Councillor, Caterham Hill Parish Council

Chair, Caterham Hill Conservative Branch

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Maria R. Grasso

Attached Documents:

- Caterham Hill Conservative Branch Boundary Commission Submission pdf.pdf