

Surrey

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (District or county councillor)

Comment text:

Good evening,

I am a recently elected Elmbridge Borough Councillor, and I would like to express my objections to the current proposals by the Boundary Commission for new Surrey County Council Divisions.

The new proposals go against the previous recommendations by Surrey County Council. On the basis of my arguments below I would urge you to reconsider the changes to the Surrey boundaries as a matter of urgency.

Judged by the Boundary Commissions own three main criteria, which are electoral equality, community identity and interests, and effective and convenient local government, I think that these new proposals fail to satisfy all three of these criteria as follows:

Electoral equality

The existing split of Divisions actually give more electoral equality than the Commission's proposals. The Dittons Division, of which we are a part, is currently 4% off the ideal Surrey average. The proposals would create a new Division which is 11% below the average. This makes no sense whatsoever and does not move us further to equality.

Community identity and interests

The Manor of Weston Green was mentioned in the Domesday Book as part of Thames Ditton. We have been inextricably linked throughout history and when the first local council was established in 1895 (the Esher & District Urban District Council) we became part of the same Division, which has continued to this day.

The Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association, formed in 1934, is the second oldest in the country. It is the focus of a strong and cohesive community, with an active membership and volunteers who deliver our quarterly magazine (Thames Ditton Today). We run a website,

and we hold regular events including our annual Secret Gardens (which alternates between Thames Ditton and Weston Green) and our Nature & Climate Festival, which is in its second year. Weston Green residents feel part of Thames Ditton - our community theatre, local shops, primary and nursery schools, Community Centre and our library are all there.

Thames Ditton and Long Ditton are closely linked, the name itself being a good indication. They are mentioned in the Domesday Book. There are many connecting roads, so they form a natural unit at the north-eastern edge of Elmbridge. There is a real sense of community within the Dittons, enhanced by being served by a single County Councillor, and the two Residents' Associations work closely together. Splitting the two areas would be artificial.

Effective and convenient local government

This proposal would result in two County Councillors serving our community. The current division boundary is clear, easily identifiable, familiar to residents and, most importantly, it works. This is why Surrey County Council themselves did not propose any major change.

Elaine Sesemann

Cllr Elaine Sesemann, Elmbridge Borough Council representing Thames Ditton ward.

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Attached Documents:

None attached