

Derbyshire

Personal Details:

Name: Professor Jeremy Higham

Email: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name: South Darley Parish Council (Representative of parish/town council)

Comment text:

Related subject: Border between Derwent Valley ED and Matlock ED

This is the formal response to the Derbyshire Electoral Review from South Darley Parish Council on behalf of its residents in Darley Bridge, Oker, Snitterton and Wensley.

The parish of South Darley has a strong and clear rural identity, comprising the villages of Darley Bridge and Wensley and the hamlets of Oker and Snitterton. These settlements are in close proximity – for example, from the centre of Oker, the centre of the other three are easily walkable, well under a mile to each one.

Together they have a long shared history and have a current and future-oriented sense of community, focussed on the activities taking place at South Darley village hall, South Darley and Wensley Reading Room in the South Darley parish church and of course at the South Darley Primary School as well as at our one pub, The Three Stags.

There is a wide variety of societies and groups which meet in these shared parish spaces, and which contribute to our sense of community and identity.

Not only is the shared identity of rural South Darley Parish strong but it is quite distinct and qualitatively different from the urban identity of the town of Matlock.

It is the belief of the Parish Council that the parish of South Darley should remain together within the Derbyshire County Electoral division of Derwent Valley. For the sake of clarity, we believe it is appropriate for the three wards of South Darley parish (namely: South Darley ward; Oker and Snitterton ward; Wensley ward) to remain together in same semi-rural ED. In other words, the boundary between Matlock ED and Derwent Valley ED should follow the South Darley parish boundary and NOT the district boundary.

The reason for this latter comment is that for technical boundary reasons the District Boundary line was drawn cutting through the South Darley Parish and placing the rural Oker and Snitterton ward in Matlock West district ward. This district boundary change was a last-minute decision, and which was produced for the first time as a final recommendation with no opportunity for the community to respond or comment.

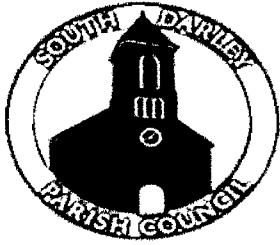
This surprising recommendation was contrary to the strongly held views of the local community. A consultation was held by the Parish Council at the time and of the 121 written responses, 118 “strongly objected” to the recommendation.

Derbyshire Dales District Council unanimously voted to reverse this decision by the LGBCE and formally requested for Oker and Snitterton ward to rejoin the other two wards of South Darley parish in the district ward of Bonsall and Winster. The principle of this was accepted by the Boundary Commission in its response. It noted "it will not be possible to provide a related alteration to the district ward boundary in time for the May 2023 elections. However, we would be happy to consider a related alteration request for the subsequent May 2027 district election." We understand that Derbyshire Dales District Council officers are wishing to resubmit an alteration order at this stage, for implementation in 2027.

Pending this being approved, the parish council considers it of a key importance that the placing of the boundary line for the ED follows the parish boundary and continues to keep the whole of South Darley parish in the Derwent Valley ED as presently.

Attached Documents:

None attached



South Darley Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Colin Swindell

Visit our website – www.southdarleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

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Derbyshire Electoral Review - South Darley Parish response

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Yours faithfully


Brian Haymes
Chair