

# Worcestershire

## Personal Details:

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**Organisation Name:** Evesham Town Council (Representative of parish/town council)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Proposal to extend Harvington ward in Evesham parish

Evesham Town Council does not support the proposed boundary changes and their effect on Evesham town centre.

The plan to include Evesham town centre in Harvington Division in no way reflects the community interests or identity of Evesham.

The proposed new boundary of Harvington Division will include the commercial and recreational heart of Evesham, including the primary retail area, the town centre parks and gardens and the town's key historic sites and buildings.

While neither the retailers, the monuments nor the parks form part of the electorate, they nonetheless require effective representation at county level.

The town centre of Evesham is an area with significant issues for which the county council, as highway authority, is responsible. It is also an area where all three of Evesham's local authorities, the town, district and county councils, need to work effectively in partnership.

Placing the town centre within a division which is otherwise primarily rural, and extends some considerable distance from Evesham, will inevitably dilute the effectiveness of this cooperation.

Although the Commission reported that Harvington and Norton have links to Evesham this is only really in terms of facilities provided by Evesham. The town does not have the same reciprocal links or working relationship with those villages. The needs of the rural community are very different to the town.

The county councillors who currently represent Evesham town centre, and have represented it in the past, represent divisions which are focussed entirely on Evesham. They have expended a considerable amount of time and effort working for improvements to the town centre, with significant success. They have also effectively liaised with other authorities and local community groups to ensure that the county council provides effective support to the events which are a key part of the town's calendar.

The Harvington division, by contrast, is focussed primarily on the villages and rural area to the north of the town. It is difficult to see how a county councillor with such a different focus could effectively represent the residents and businesses of Evesham town centre and play a significant role in working with other

local authorities covering Evesham.

Geographically and culturally, the urban heart of Evesham has little in common with the rural area of the county further north. Inkberrow, at the far end of the proposed division, has no natural links with Evesham. The smaller villages of The Lenches in the centre of the proposed division have a rural environment and culture which also differs significantly from the market town environment and culture of Evesham.

Evesham Town Council also notes that the Commission was content with an electoral variance of 11% in the Bredon, Broadway and Littletons Division and 14% in the Pershore and Upton Snodsbury Division during the review.

Evesham Town Council feels that the variances for the Evesham area should be accepted as the proposed change would not reflect community identity or support effective and convenient local government.

For these reasons, we would urge the LGBCE to reconsider the draft proposals and ensure that Evesham town centre continues to be represented by a councillor who is focussed solely on Evesham.

## **Attached Documents:**

*None attached*