

Sandwell

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: cradley heath and old hill

I strongly oppose the proposed changes to the Cradley Heath and Old Hill ward, which would separate Old Hill and include it in a new Blackheath and Old Hill ward.

I fail to understand why the wishes of the elected Sandwell council are being disregarded in these proposals. It is particularly baffling that the changes are being influenced by the unelected Halesowen Conservative Association, which has no place in shaping ward boundaries in Sandwell. Halesowen is not even part of Sandwell; it is in Dudley. The involvement of a Conservative Association from Dudley in trying to alter Sandwell's wards is an unacceptable interference with local democracy, and it should not be entertained.

According to your own guidelines, a good pattern of wards should:

Reflect community interests and identities, supported by evidence of community links.

Be based on clear, easily identifiable boundaries.

Consider whether the pattern reflects where local residents access shops, medical services, leisure facilities, etc.

It is important to highlight that the centres of Old Hill and Cradley Heath are just a five-minute walk apart, whereas Blackheath is a forty-minute walk away. People from Blackheath don't visit Old Hill because it offers limited shopping options, and likewise, people from Old Hill don't travel to Blackheath as there is nothing there but a Sainsbury's. Instead, residents of Old Hill go to Cradley Heath for services, including a Tesco store and people from Cradley Heath come to Old Hill to use the medical centre and the doctors surgery. There are no meaningful community connections between Old Hill and Blackheath. In fact, there is a clear physical boundary between the two—a big hill and a canal—that further separates them.

Residents of Old Hill use services in Cradley Heath, not Blackheath.

Additionally, Old Hill shares a Cradley Heath postcode because of their proximity, with only a vague boundary separating them. Old Hill is not, and should not be considered part of Blackheath.

Attached Documents:

None attached