



8th April 2018

Dear Sirs/Mesdames

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION CONSULTATION:
WARD BOUNDARIES FOR DARTFORD: SUTTON-AT-HONE AND HAWLEY

I am writing on behalf of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St John the Baptist Church, in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sutton-at-Hone with Hawley.

The PCC considered the proposed Ward Boundary changes at their last meeting and decided to object to the proposal to change the administrative boundary so that the residents of Hawley would become part of a 'Wilmington and Hawley' ward, rather than the present 'Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley' ward.

Criterion 2 for the delineation of ward boundaries states that "Ward patterns should as far as possible reflect community interests and identities and boundaries should be identifiable." The PCC support this criterion fully, as the building of strong communities is fundamental to quality of life and is a building block for society as a whole.

Hawley has for many hundreds of years been associated with Sutton-at-Hone and the community identity links through the activities and associations experienced in residents' everyday lives. Such links are formed through church, schools, cubs/scouts/brownies/guides, football clubs, and other local organisations. The evidence received from our Church members is that there is very little community association with Wilmington, and by far the greater community links are with Sutton-at-Hone. The argument for change because the M25 is a natural ward boundary is a spurious one, as the A2 is just as much a barrier between Hawley and Wilmington.

We have received representations from parishioners living in Hawley who see no natural links with Wilmington and who are concerned that the changes will result in an uneasy division between everyday life and community representation, resulting from that representation being located in the opposite direction from the natural drift of their community.

For the above reasons we wish to lodge our objection to the proposed boundary change relation to Hawley.

Yours faithfully

Colin Lewis

Reader and PCC Member

On behalf of St John the Baptist Parochial Church Council
Sutton-at-Hone with Hawley