



8<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## **Boundaries and Ward Review of Dover District Council**

### **Personal opinion of Peter Walker**

Though I was born and bred in a South Yorkshire mining community I have lived at the above address for more than 30 years and therefore claim to know and understand the vagaries of mining , or ex-mining, communities.

The current Ward that I live in includes Eythorne, Elvington,Barfrestone,Coldred, Shepherdswell, Denton and Wootton which is quite extensive and contains a complete mix of ex-mining communities and rural communities across an extensive area. The need to rationalise Wards in the Dover District , though it has come about through Conservative dominations and desires, is a chance to re-align more meaningful communities. To this end I firmly believe that Eythorne,Elvington, Barfrestone and Coldred, with the addition of Tilmanstone substantiates this. Tilmanstone Colliery closed in the 1980's but those communities surrounding it included particularly Eythorne,Elvington and Tilmanstone itself almost exclusively, and when one looks at the polling boundaries PEX2,PT1,PEX1,and PSL2 it makes sense to put them together at this time for better representation of like communities.

Given extensive knowledge of mining communities one soon realises that mixing two different mining communities, such as that of Aylesham and the Tilmanstone area is not a wise move. Factions would exist very quickly and easily and social problems would increase. Therefore keeping them apart aids better government and social provision.

Looking at my proposal to have Eythorne,Elvington, Barfrestone, Coldred and Tilmanstone together makes good geographical sense when one looks at road boundaries like the A256 and A2 and other minor roads in those areas. Socially there is a better and more meaningful mix, for example the only school in the areas is called Eythorne Elvington Primary School, the main meeting places are in Eythorne and Elvington, children attending secondary schools go into either Sandwich or Dover, hardly ever into Canterbury or elsewhere, the width of the Ward proposed is no more than 4 miles and one Councillor would be able to manage duties relatively easily.

Looking at social movement over the years in the proposed area is quite interesting. The ex miners and their extended families have remained in Elvington, Eythorne or partially Tilmanstone and tend

to focus their shopping habits in the Dover District for most things but for specialise goods may go into Canterbury or Thanet. For entertainments there are the wo local pubs, activities in social centres in the area, or wider facilities if people are prepared to travel more than 4 miles.

Transport facilities are good with easy access to both the A256 and the A2, and easy access to either Dover Priory rail station or Shepherdswell rail station.

I do urge you to seriously consider putting Eythorne,Elvington, Barfrestone,Tilmanstone and Coldred together as one Ward with one Councillor.

Peter Walker