

Ripple Parish Council



Review Officer (Dover)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP



5th April 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

2nd Response from Ripple Parish Council regarding Local Government Boundary Commission – Electoral Review of Dover: Warding Arrangements

I write further to my letter of March 28th regarding your published consultation relating to proposed ward changes for East Kent and specifically in regard to your proposed Ward Six – Whitfield Rural. I write on behalf of Ripple Parish Council at the Councillors request.

I do not know if any of the Boundary Commission officers have actually visited the location of Whitfield, Ripple, Langdon, and Ringwould? It appears that the new ward 6 is being driven by a need to achieve specific numerical electorate figures, lumping in some small rural parishes with a large soon to be urban sprawl of Whitfield, a process no doubt undertaken on a computer screen many miles away from the geographical locations and ideologically a million miles away from what would work for the electorate of East Kent.

The Parish of Ripple is an agriculturally focussed parish, with an older demographic mixed in both political and economic profile but very much historically linked to the similar parishes of Sutton, St Margaret's, Ringwould and Kingsdown. Our issues around infrastructure, the blight of endless proposed housing developments plugging into an unsuitable drainage, transport and social structure are the same and historically we are all villages based around the Town of Deal. Itself a town based historically on fishing, agriculture and the Royal Navy.

We do not in any way have any form of emotional or political tie with the Town of Dover nor its outlying conurbations. I would very firmly place the conurbation of Whitfield as a Dover focussed housing estate and the current housing figures for the intended 1250 new build homes are not in any way likely to have any form of positive impact on the rural parishes you propose to lump into this new Ward 6 – on the contrary the new developments are already creating speed problems, traffic numbers, litter and rat runs along quiet narrow rural country lanes not designed for such traffic numbers. This hardly unifies the electorate.

To have two District Councillors trying to balance the needs of both, very opposed communities would be a thankless task and would in turn lead to a 'beige' couple of councillors scared to partner with either side on many key issues. Being elected politicians they would probably need to be driven

on anything contentious by the larger population of Whitfield, they do after all need to retain their seats every 5 years, and such political considerations would have nothing but a detrimental impact on the good people living in rural parishes such as Ripple.

In summary we are vehemently opposed to the imposition of an illogical and entirely bogus ward proposed in your consultation for Ward Six. You are reinventing the wheel to serve your agenda not the people of Ripple and the rural communities of East Kent who all very clearly wish to remain in a ward better suited to the entire area, namely Kingsdown Rural or similar.

Should you wish to discuss the matter further or meet with our Councillors we would of course be delighted to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours faithfully



Karen Castle (Clerk) Keith Morrison (Chairman)

For and on behalf of Ripple Parish Council