



Review Officer (South Cambridgeshire)
LGBCE
14th Floor
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

21 July 2016

Dear Sir or Madam

Thank you for your letter of 10 May concerning the electoral review of South Cambridgeshire.

As a parish council we have reviewed your draft. Through the parish magazine and by a note to each householder we have ensured that the community is fully aware of the recommendations.

We are particularly disappointed that a change to the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) ward boundary that will affect Fen Drayton has been recommended. Last year we had been assured that no change in our ward was being sought. The parish as a whole was very happy that the existing relationships would be maintained.

The Fen Drayton Parish Council is unanimous in its preference for remaining in the Papworth Ward. At the village open meeting on 11 July, attended by 55 parishioners in addition to parish councillors, there was complete agreement that the proposed new ward is inappropriate. Several members of the community have written to the parish council with their objections. These communications are appended to this letter.

As far as we can see the only reason for the change has come about for reasons connected with electoral equality. Perhaps this is linked with the impending expansion of the population at Northstowe? Thus it appears that Fen Drayton has been drawn into this equation as it is close by. However, the proposed ward of Swavesey, Fen Drayton, and Lolworth with one councillor is exposed to the expansion of Swavesey which is currently planning for a growth of twenty to twenty-five percent in the next few years which will produce substantial electoral inequality (even though at this point we note that the electors per representative would be slightly below the average). We believe that it would be far better to remain in the current ward that has much fewer projected housing developments and two councillors that give stability.



It is a prime concern that the village would lose the close relationship that has been built up with the two councillors from SCDC Papworth Ward over several years particularly with their support for the local flood defence scheme that has recently been successfully implemented. From a ward that has several very similar communities to our own the councillors are well versed in the interests of the parish. Having two representatives provides a good degree of back up and retention of knowledge that is particularly valuable.

There is a real and valid worry that within the ward that is proposed there will be a conspicuous centre of gravity with one very large and rapidly expanding village with two much smaller stable peripheral ones. This will produce an imbalance especially as the interests of the villages are different, particularly with regard to commercial activities. The Papworth Ward does not have nearly so much divergence of interest.

With regard to local identities there is in general little collaboration or interaction of interests with Swavesey. The concept of a ward as a community in this instance is not realistic, and certainly in our view not a valid reason for changing a boundary.

As part of the criteria for the determination of boundaries we note that the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government. This certainly applies to the Papworth Ward where we believe that the current situation provides this more than adequately for Fen Drayton and a change of boundary is only a potential source of uncertainty and unnecessary adjustment.

Last year there was a local proposal that a division be drawn up to comprise Willingham, Over, Swavesey and our own parish. We pointed out that there were no obvious advantages for Fen Drayton over those that we have currently within the Papworth organization. This information does not seem to have been promulgated further.

We are rather disconcerted that there is little consultation with us prior to proposed changes and that the interests of our village are given little weight relative to larger communities.

We trust that the overwhelming desire expressed by the Fen Drayton parish to stay within the current boundaries will be respected by the commission.

Yours sincerely

Harry Webster

Chairman, Fen Drayton Parish Council



EMAILS AGAINST THE PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGE, RECEIVED BY FEN DRAYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Please count me as against the boundary change for Fen Drayton to include us with Swavesey & Lolworth, and especially changes from our two Councillors who have worked so well with the village for at least 17 years.

David Spencer

I am new to the area but my husband and his family have lived in the village nearly 50 years. My children attend the school and enjoy the village as it is. I am sure if we are to merge this will be to the detriment of our village and in time we will lose our identity. As it is we have a limited bus service and when my husband grew up here, there was a post office, shop and green houses that provided employment.

Let Fen Drayton be the village it should be in its own right.

Julie Bishop

Dear Sir/Madam, Writing as resident of FenDrayton, South Cambridgeshire, I do not wish to see any changes to the ward boundaries as we have an excellent working relationship with our district councillors who live local and understand our issues.

Tony Wilderspin

Two main points of concern to me are:

- 1) We have been part of a Papworth Hundred for the best part of 1000 years. The Domesday Book of 1086 lodged in the British Library says this. This is part of our heritage and;
- 2) If the situation for Fen Drayton in respect of representation is satisfactory for the constituents, why change it? (If it's not broken don't fix it!) Perhaps we need a parish referendum to confirm this point?

Richard Close

I strongly believe that there should be no change to the district council boundary. Fen Drayton's current relationship with neighbouring villages works extraordinarily well, the Parish Council ably represents our interests, and we should not be subsumed by a larger village for bureaucratic convenience.

NO CHANGE IS NEEDED FOR FEN DRAYTON



Francis des Rosiers (Mrs)

We would like to add our voices in opposing the changes, supporting as we do all the points made on your notice about this. In general we are in favour of reducing bureaucracy and keeping local administration as local as possible.

Joseph & Janet McLelland

We would like to register our opposition to change our current boundary. Fen Drayton is a small village with little scope for any large development therefor to include us in with Swavesey, a large and growing village, would swamp us and we think we would lose not only our identity but could quite easily be overruled on matters pertinent to us.

We have also had a good association with our councillors which has grown over the years and who know our village and its concerns to retain its identity.

We ask you to strongly oppose this proposed move.

Edna and Ian Ruggles