

Lewes District

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Comment text:

Please see attached document from Wivelsfield Parish Council, supporting the retention of the present joint ward arrangement for Chailey and Wivelsfield within the Lewes District area.

Uploaded Documents:

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27 November 2015

Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor Millbank Tower
21-24 Millbank
LONDON
SW1P 4QP

FAO: The Review Officer (East Sussex)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Electoral Review of East Sussex County and Districts
Lewes District - Chailey & Wivelsfield**

Thank you for your letter of 22 September, consulting upon electoral arrangements for East Sussex County Council and its five districts.

Wivelsfield Parish Council strongly supports present electoral arrangements which have Wivelsfield paired as a joint ward with Chailey within the Lewes District area. The Parish Council does not wish to see this arrangement altered.

It has been concerned to learn of recommendations made at a meeting of Lewes District Council on 9 November, which propose that Wivelsfield should become a ward in its own right, whilst amalgamating Chailey with Barcombe and Hamsey.

In your letter of consultation, you state three criteria against which electoral arrangements must be reviewed and balanced:

- To deliver electoral equality where each councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others in that local authority.
- That the pattern of wards and divisions should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

The recommendations made by Lewes District Council seem to have focussed on the former point and looked at electoral arrangements for our parishes primarily on the basis of numbers. No consideration has been given to the interests and affiliations of the local communities or the impact on the effectiveness of local governance arrangements.

The numbers shown on the East Sussex 'electoral proforma data' spreadsheet, used as a basis for the recommendations by Lewes District Council, appear flawed. They indicate a predicted increase in the electoral population of Chailey of 20%, which is entirely at odds with anticipated growth from development within the Parish.

Chailey and Wivelsfield parishes have commonalities which make them suited to being paired as a joint ward. The majority of children from Wivelsfield Parish attend Chailey Secondary School and Chailey Children's centre is a popular facility for pre-school families in Wivelsfield. Members of the two parishes value and support the local Hospice, situated on the shared border of each parish and many from both communities value and support the Site of Special Scientific Interest of Chailey Common.

Residents of Chailey, like Wivelsfield, look to the Mid-Sussex towns of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill for facilities and services. The two parishes face similar issues being geographically located in the northern part of the East Sussex/Lewes District areas, outside of the South Downs National Park, but bordering West Sussex/Mid-Sussex District areas. This position makes some of the issues facing our Parishes distinctly different to those facing other parishes in the Lewes District area. Having joint ward status with two district councillors, each with an overview of both parishes and able to have a voice within the District Council arena, is invaluable.

Wivelsfield Parish Council strongly supports the continuation of the present joint ward arrangement for Chailey and Wivelsfield and asks that you give weight also to the arguments presented by Chailey Parish Council and Wivelsfield & Chailey District Councillor, Sharon Davy, when making your decision.

Yours faithfully,



Clerk to the Council



