



**SUBMISSION TO
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION'S
CONSULTATION ON THEIR DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
WARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL**

2 April 2017

Introduction

Sandyhurst Lane Residents' Association (SLRA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft recommendations for the warding arrangements for Ashford Borough Council. This is one of two submissions.

Goat Lees ward

We are extremely disappointed to see, in paragraph 50 of the report, the recommendation to create "a new one-member ward named Goat Lees for an area that was previously within Bockhanger ward".

This is factually incorrect. The area concerned is not currently in Bockhanger ward but is part of the existing Boughton Aluph & Eastwell ward which, by dint of not being mentioned anywhere in the text of the report (other than at parish level), is apparently being abolished.

Factual inaccuracies in the report impact on our confidence in its recommendations.

However, more important is the fact that Sandyhurst Lane and its adjacent roads are all located in a rural area and that the creation of Goat Lees ward transfers the north-eastern half of it into an urban ward, which is inconsistent with the recommendation in paragraph 44.

Paragraph 44 states: "*We received a number of submissions suggesting that Sandyhurst Lane be included wholly in the Downs West ward. We have therefore amended the ward boundary in this area.*"

This implies that LGBCE has included the **whole** of Sandyhurst Lane in Downs West ward, as we requested in our first submission. However, this is contradicted by paragraph 50 and the associated map, where we find that only the south-eastern **half** of Sandyhurst Lane has been included in Downs West ward.

The residents of Sandyhurst Lane and its adjacent roads are a strong community, united through our very active Residents' Association. They enjoy a rural environment and the key objective in our Constitution is to preserve that rural environment. The draft recommendations threaten to divide our community in two, with half being thrust unwillingly into an urban ward.

The strength of feeling is demonstrated by a survey of residents carried out by the Boughton Aluph & Eastwell Parish Council in April 2016, as part of the Neighbourhood Plan development. This showed that 92% of respondents wished to preserve the rural character of the parish and 91% wished to preserve the rural/urban boundary at Sandyhurst Lane.

We therefore respectfully request that the recommendations are revised so that this division is avoided and that all of our close-knit community may continue to enjoy a rural environment.