

**From:** Philip [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 September 2017 18:45  
**To:** Cooper, Mark  
**Subject:** Local Government Boundary Review - Forest of Dean, Hartpury and Redmarley

Dear Sirs

I note your proposal for a warding pattern in the Forest of Dean and would like to make the following comments;

Firstly, it is my long held view (supported by more than ten years experience as a District Councillor) that wherever possible wards should be designed to have a single member representing them. This is less confusing for residents and more effective as only a single point of contact is required.

I am currently the representative for the Parishes of Corse, Hartpury and Upleadon. I attend three parish Councils and cover a rural area around six miles long and four miles wide.

I understand that your proposal suggests a ward of eight parishes (Bromsberrow, Redmarley, Pauntly, Staunton, Corse, Hartpury, Upleadon and Rudford & Highleadon) so eight Parish Councils and an area around ten miles long and five miles wide. From a perspective of the demands on a prospective councillor this task is such that many will be deterred from taking the first step on to the electoral ladder and that those who are elected will find it difficult to effectively and conveniently represent all of their residents.

I can understand how you have reached your proposals given representations from some local residents and the two Parish Councils of Corse and Staunton. My concern is that these views have been co-ordinated by a small number of residents, fail to see the wider picture for the whole area and actually represent only a minority view from the parishes from which they come.

As I see the situation, having talked to residents from my three existing parishes and some from further afield, the majority view is that which parishes are grouped together as a ward is much less important than knowing who their councillor is and that their representative has time to consider their views and be effective in bringing them forward in Local Government.

My proposal therefore is that your proposed ward is split into two; the first **Bromsberrow, Redmarley, Pauntly and Staunton** and the second **Corse, Hartpury, Upleadon and Rudford & Highleadon**. The latter of these being as requested by the two parishes of Upleadon and Hartpury in your earlier round of consultation. I appreciate that this separates into different wards the parishes of Corse and Staunton but is no different from the outcome reached in the relatively recent boundary review for Gloucestershire County Council.

One can make arguments about community ties between parishes, shared facilities and the like. Residents may play football or cricket for teams in neighbouring parishes rather than their own, use neighbouring Village Halls, Pubs, Post Offices or share community services (our doctors surgery is a good example) which range over a much wider area than could possibly be put in a single ward. Over the years in my parish significant numbers of children have not been educated at the local school while some from well away have. The important thing is that a line has to be drawn somewhere and that line needs to respect the greater good not just individual desires.

From the electoral data supplied to me by the district council the separated wards would have electorates of 1887 and 1620 currently, rising to 1983 and 1675 by 2023. At +7% and -8% both figures are within your tolerance band currently and change to +2% and -13% by 2023. While I accept that -13% is a little outside what would be ideal going forward there have been several recent additional planning permissions granted in the Hartpury area since the data was put together in May 2017. This will help to rectify the statistical position and is in fact little worse than the situation in other proposed rural wards in the north of the district.

My view remains that your proposed two member ward is simply too large geographically, contains too many Parish Councils and too many isolated communities. Doubtless there will be others who hold a different view to mine but it is my firm belief that by splitting your proposed ward in the way I suggest will give all the residents of these eight parishes District Councillors who will provide effective and convenient Local Government for everyone.

Yours faithfully

Philip Burford  
District Councillor  
Corse, Hartpury and Upleadon