Local resident’s submissions to the Wealden District Council electoral review

This PDF document contains submissions from local residents

Some versions of Adobe allow the viewer to move quickly between bookmarks.
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Nick Richards
E-mail: 
Postcode: 

Organisation Name:

Comment text:
As a resident of a village in the SE section of the proposed Horam and Punnetts Town Ward, I consider that the Commission’s recommendation for it to be a large two member ward is flawed and I strongly support WDC’s proposal for it to be divided into two single member wards. In order for them to properly reflect the interests and identity of the community, we expect our district councillors to have a detailed knowledge of and affinity to the ward they represent, but the proposed ward is geographically so large that will be impossible for them to do so effectively. It is also divided between the economically larger and more densely populated area centred on Horam to the West and the collection of more sparsely populated and very rural villages in the East, mainly within the existing Warbleton Parish area. These two communities are different and inevitably face different issues and have different priorities. The likely result of the Commission’s recommendation being implemented is that the two councillors will be forced into some sort of informal arrangement to divide the ward, which could not be formally recognised or publicised. Surely it is a far better solution to establish two separate one member wards as proposed by WDC, particularly as they seem to have adequately addressed the Commission’s concern over the number of electors each councillor should represent.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
We wish to raise objection to the proposed inclusion of Isfield into the new ward of "West Uckfield". To us it doesn't make sense.

Isfield is a rural community and does not share the same interests as urban Uckfield. Here in Isfield we are interested in preserving the countryside environment, along with maintenance of grass verges, hedges and footpaths and we have concerns with speeding in country lanes etc. Isfield therefore has completely different issues to Uckfield.

We do not believe the urban area of Uckfield should stray west of the clearly identifiable boundary of the A22 by pass which at the moment separates the urban environment from the rural areas of Little Horsted and Isfield. Please continue to recognise this as a boundary for Uckfield..

We would like the Boundaries Commission to seriously consider keeping us as a rural District ward and therefore a County ward with Danehill Piltdown and Little Horsted, much as we are now.

Joan and Derek Richardson (Isfield residents)
Dear Sir,

Regarding the proposed changes to the Isfield boundary to be included with West Uckfield, I would like to object.

Isfield is a rural farming community and as such has very different needs than the urban requirements of Uckfield.

Why can’t the villages of Isfield, Fletching, Nutley and Piltdown make up the numbers you require, they are all rural.

The current proposal does not reflect the individual identities of the villages. Uckfield should stay within the natural boundary of the A22.

We should be careful how we treat our villages now, to avoid the possibility of urban sprawl in the future.

Keep towns and villages separate because their independence is crucial to both.

Yours Sincerely.

Peter Rigby
Dear Sir,

Ref Boundary and Ward Changes for Wealden District Council

I write, as a resident of the village of Hoee, for more than forty years. It was very disappointing to see that the proposed new ward, is referred to as “Pevensye and West Ham,” with no mention of the village of Hoee. This is rather disrespectful, as Hoee, is listed in the Doomsday Book for its important Salt Pans and although a small village, it deserves to be recognised. When viewed geographically, it is plainly obvious that Hoee is an add on to Pevensye and West Ham. The only link between the two communities, is the three mile “A259” road, which runs across the Pevensye Levels and is inhabited by farm animals and wildlife. Very few constituents.

The two communities, have very different make ups. Pevensye and West Ham are more urban and town like, close to the sea and Eastbourne. Hoee is a small farming village, with significant links with Ninfield, a mile and a half away. The proposed boundary, would in my view, limit the voice of a small farming community, compared with a more urban life style of the Pevensye area. We are close to Ninfield in a number of ways. Commercially, the shops we depend on are in Ninfield, educationally, the school is in Ninfield, medically, the Doctors surgery is in Ninfield. Also although Ninfield is a larger community it is still more agricultural and similar to Hoee. The views of the two villages would compliment one another and strengthen the voice of a rural ward in Wealden Council’s Chamber.

In conclusion, I would like Hoee, to remain as a part of a ward, in association with Ninfield and Wartling, communities with a similar background. My view is that the Wards should represent the people, not some arithmetic formula or plan.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. Rist
Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to object to the proposed ward boundaries which separate the village of Hooe from Ninfield in my capacity as a member of St Oswald's Church Hooe and as a member of the P.C.C.

These are my objections,

St Mary's Church Ninfield and St Oswald's Church Hooe have traditionally shared an incumbent.

Most of the children in Hooe attend the Church of England School in Ninfield.

Hooe is in the same Battle and Bexhill Deanery as Ninfield.

The worshipping community of the 2 churches have regular joint services, alternating between the 2 villages.

We combine for various social events like The Harvest Supper.

Ninfield School has used St Oswald's Church at Hooe for concerts and Nativity plays.

Volunteers from Hooe church regularly help out in Ninfield School

I know of no similar links between Hooe and Pevensey or Westham.

I feel that the residents of Hooe will not be fully represented if we become part of the ward of Pevensey and Westham as the needs of a rural farming community are distinctly different to a seaside town. Our needs will be over looked whereas they are likely to be similar to Ninfield and Wartling making it easier for a councillor to represent us fully. It is noted that Hooe is not even included in the name of the proposed new ward of Pevensey and Westham!

Yours faithfully
M. Rist
May 31st 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a resident of Hooe for 42 years, I wish to object to the proposed changes to the ward boundaries which include Hooe in with Pevensey and Westham and separate our village from Ninfield and Wartling.

My objections are as follows;

1. Should we become part of the ward of Pevensey and Westham, I fear that Hooe will not be fully represented. It will be a small rural area within a larger more urban area with different needs. Indeed Hooe was not even mentioned in the name of the proposed new ward on the on-line map which seems an insult to a village that is mentioned in the Doomsday Book.

2. Physically, Hooe is separated from Pevensey by the Levels and the A259 and there is little, if any, interaction between the communities. Building between Hooe and Pevensey is unlikely as the Levels are SSI, so the communities will remain separate.

3. Hooe, Wartling and Ninfield are physically closer together with similar rural farming economies and would have similar needs making it easier for a councillor to represent us.

4. Hooe has traditionally been linked to Ninfield. Our children go to Ninfield School and Play group and then on to Claverham. The nearest shop/P.O. is in Ninfield as is the Doctors' Surgery. Ninfield Church and Hooe Church share a Parish Priest. Our communities naturally interact. We share clubs and social events e.g. Ninfield Flower Group, Hooe Line Dancing.

These are the reason I feel Hooe Ninfield and Wartling should stay together. I hope you will listen to common sense and not just look at numbers and statistics.

Yours Faithfully,
Margaret Rist
Dear Sir,

My husband and I object to the proposed Boundary changes for Isfield. Isfield is run very well by the Parish Council, they understand the needs of the village which would be overlooked if we were to be part of urban West Uckfield. We urge the committee to leave us as a Rural District Boundary ward with Danehill, Isfield and Little Horsted.

Margaret and Malcolm Robertson

Sent from my iPad
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Albert Graham Robinson

Comment text:

We live in Eastbourne Heights which, stupidly, is in Wealden! We have no affinity with our MP for Battle and a close interest in the MP for Eastbourne and would like the Boundary to be moved to allow our small estate of about 100 homes to be sited in Eastbourne, to match our name. Albert Graham Robinson

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Dear Ms Starkie

My wife Juliet and I live at [redacted]. Our house is in the proposed north Uckfield area as a consequence of the proposed new boundaries. We strongly object to this proposal. For the last 27 years we have lived in Piltdown, Nutley and Chelwood Gate. It is clearly ridiculous to suggest that we are a part of North Uckfield. The issues facing a rural area are totally different than those of an urban area. This area identifies itself with a country location. I can only imagine the boundaries have been chosen to meet recommendations of population per area.

I trust you will review this proposal.

Thank you

Peter and Juliet Ross

Sen
Starkie, Emily

From: Ward, Lucy
Sent: 19 May 2016 13:23
To: Mayers, Mishka; Starkie, Emily
Subject: FW: Rotherfield Parish Council response to Electoral Review of East Sussex County Council and Districts: Draft Recommendations

Not sure, it’s one of Emily’s – Emily have you had this?

From: Mayers, Mishka
Sent: 19 May 2016 13:22
To: Ward, Lucy
Subject: FW: Rotherfield Parish Council response to Electoral Review of East Sussex County Council and Districts: Draft Recommendations

Having a big clear out of Heathers, Reviews@ and my inbox, not sure if you have already received this sub?

Sorry if you haven’t and its late

From: Rotherfield Parish
Sent: 28 April 2016 09:38
To: Mayers, Mishka
Subject: Rotherfield Parish Council response to Electoral Review of East Sussex County Council and Districts: Draft Recommendations

These have been considered and it was resolved at the 31st March 2016 Council Meeting that Rotherfield Parish Council support the recommendations of the Review.

Trevor Thorpe

Trevor Thorpe
Clerk to Rotherfield Parish Council

www.rotherfieldpc.co.uk
Follow us on Twitter - @RotherfieldPC, also on Facebook

From: "Mayers, Mishka"
To:  
Sent: Tuesday, 15 March 2016, 15:40
Subject: Electoral Review of East Sussex County Council and Districts: Draft Recommendations

Dear Parish or Town Clerk

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND DISTRICTS: DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has published draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for:

- East Sussex County Council
- Eastbourne Borough Council
- Hastings Borough Council
- Lewes District Council
- Rother District Council
- Wealden District Council

Today is the start of a thirteen week public consultation on the Commission's draft recommendations on new district ward and county division boundaries across East Sussex County Council and districts. The consultation closes on 16 June 2016.

View the draft recommendations
You can view the Commission's draft recommendations at:

- [https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6010](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6010) - East Sussex County Council
- [https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6014](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6014) - Eastbourne Borough Council
- [https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6012](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6012) - Hastings Borough Council
- [https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6013](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6013) - Lewes District Council
- [https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6015](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6015) - Rother District Council
- [https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6011](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/6011) - Wealden District Council

You can find interactive maps, a report and guidance on how to have your say at the links above. The Commission has not finalised its conclusions and now invites representations on the draft recommendations.

Enclosed with this letter is a summary outlining the Commission's draft recommendations for East Sussex and relevant district. An interactive map of the Commission's recommendations, electorate figures and guidance on how to propose new wards and/or divisions is available on the consultation area at: [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk). Further information about the review and the Commission's work is also published on our website at: [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk).

Have your say
We encourage everyone who has a view on the draft recommendations to contact us whether you support them or whether you wish to propose alternative arrangements. Before finalising the recommendations, the Commission will consider every representation received during consultation whether it is submitted by an individual, a local group or an organisation. We will weigh each submission against the criteria the Commission must follow when drawing up electoral arrangements:

- To deliver electoral equality where each councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the county or district.
- That the pattern of wards and electoral 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 table below summarises the Commission’s draft recommendations. In particular the table includes the number of county councillors which are allocated to each district under a total council size of 50 for East Sussex County Council. The table also shows how many electors per councillor the Commission has aimed to achieve in its scheme to deliver electoral fairness as well as summarising whether the Commission has proposed one, two or three member wards. Please note that the Commission has a statutory duty to favour a uniform pattern of two-member wards across Hastings due to its electoral cycle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>No. of district cllrs</th>
<th>No. of county cllrs</th>
<th>Electors per district cllr</th>
<th>Electors per county cllr</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
East Sussex County Council | N/A | 50 | N/A | 8638 | The Commission has proposed a uniform pattern of single-member divisions

Eastbourne Borough Council | 27 | 9 | 2846 | 8638 | The Commission has proposed a uniform pattern of three-member wards

Hastings Borough Council | 32 | 8 | 2065 | 8638 | The Commission has proposed a uniform pattern of two-member wards to reflect the electoral cycle

Lewes District Council | 41 | 9 | 1993 | 8638 | The Commission has proposed a mixed pattern of one-, two- or three-member wards

Rother District Council | 38 | 9 | 2027 | 8638 | The Commission has proposed a mixed pattern of one- or two member wards

Wealden District Council | 45 | 15 | 2894 | 8638 | The Commission has proposed a mixed pattern of one- or two member wards

It is important that you take account of the criteria if you are suggesting an alternative pattern of wards and/or divisions. Accordingly, all proposals should demonstrate how they meet the Commission’s statutory criteria. The Commission will take decisions based on the strength of the evidence presented to it and not merely on assertion. For example, details of community interests such as the location and use made of local facilities, services and local organisations will carry greater weight than submissions that simply assert that the area has a community identity.

The Commission will consider all submissions on their merit. A well-evidenced submission from an individual which addresses the statutory criteria will be more persuasive than one which does not, even if the latter is from an elected individual or body.

You can find additional guidance and information about previous electoral reviews on our website to help you or your organisation make a submission.

Get in touch
The Commission welcomes comments on the recommendations report by 16 June 2016. Representations should be made:

- Through our interactive consultation portal where you can explore the maps of the recommendations, draw your own boundaries and supply comments at: www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk.

- By email to: reviews@lgbce.org.uk.

- Or in writing to:
  Review Officer (East Sussex)
  Local Government Boundary Commission for England
  14th Floor
  Millbank Tower
  Millbank
  London
  SW1P 4QP

The Commission aims to publish every response it receives during phases of consultation. If you do not want all or any part of your response or name to be made public, you must state this clearly in the response. Any such request should explain why
confidentiality is necessary. All responses may be subject to publication or disclosure as required by law (in particular under the Freedom of Information Act 2000). This is the last opportunity to influence the Commission's recommendations before they are finalised. We therefore encourage local people to get in touch with us and have their say. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.
Yours sincerely

Johanna Porter
Review Manager
reviews@lgbce.org.uk
0330 500 1279
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Chris Rothery
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name:

Comment text:
I live in the Parish of Fletching and do not agree with the proposed change to the Danehill and Fletching boundary. It does not make sense to split the Piltdown area between Danehill and Fletching and Uckfield Ridgewood & Little Horsted as is being proposed. Piltdown have their own Resident Association and have a strong feeling of bond in their community that has been strengthened significantly in the last few years. Splitting this area makes no sense to me. (I do not live in Piltdown but know the Fletching/ Piltdown area well.)

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
The Review Officer (Wealden)
LGBCE
14th Floor
Millbank Tower
London
SW1P 4QP

15th June

Dear Madam,

Re: New Ward Boundaries for Wealden and East Sussex

I am writing to you to let you know my strong objections to the draft recommendations for the new district ward boundaries for Wealden as well as new county council divisions for East Sussex. My specific concern is the Parish of Fletching and the existing ward of Danehill, Fletching, Piltdown, Nutley, Isfield and Little Horsted.

I do not believe the recommendations reflect the identity and interests of the Piltdown Local Community by splitting the community geographically within Piltdown.

Piltdown has a very active Residents Association that has brought the community together. To have to deal with two separate County Councillors and District Councillors for local proposals or initiatives is not effective local government.

I do not believe the draft recommendations meet the three statutory criteria of the review process.

The creation of a Parish Ward for Shortbridge would mean electors in this new created ward have only one vote in a Fletching Parish Council election, whereas before they had up to nine votes for Parish Councillors. This clearly produces an inequality of voting by limiting the choice between the different parts of the Piltdown Community and the rest of the Fletching Parish.

The urban area of Uckfield should not stray west of the clearly definable boundary of the A22, which separates the rural areas of Fletching, Piltdown, Isfield and Little Horsted from Uckfield and its new development in Ridgewood.

I believe all Piltdown electors should be kept in the same District and County Council wards with Fletching in a rural ward, which, for equality of electoral numbers should comprise a District Ward of Danehill, Fletching, Isfield and Little Horsted.

Yours faithfully

Christopher Rothery
Dear Ms. Starkie,

**East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council Electoral Review**

I was very appreciative of the time you so kindly devoted to answering some of my queries when I rang you earlier this month. The conversation has helped others and myself to crystallise some of the issues that the Draft Recommendations have raised. Nevertheless, I have to write to object strongly to these published Draft Recommendations for the above, particularly in respect of the proposed Uckfield West and Isfield District ward, which in turn affects the proposed Uckfield North County ward, in that I believe they do not meet the three statutory criteria of electoral equality, community identity, clearly identifiable boundaries and effective and convenient local government.

As you will see, I live in Sharpsbridge Lane and in an area that is proposed to be part of the above District and County wards, so am directly affected by your draft recommendations for them. I did mention to you in our conversation that I am a member of the Piltdown Residents Association, being Deputy Chairman when it was founded, and am a member of Fletching Parish Council and one of the two Wealden District Councillors for the existing Danehill/Nutley/Fletching/Isfield/Little Horsted ward. Within Wealden District Council I also sit on the Planning Committee for the Northern part of Wealden, and am a member of the Planning Portfolio Holder’s Cabinet Advisory Group. In this respect I may be in a good position especially to comment on the effective and convenient local government aspect of your proposal, as well as understanding the practical issues faced by a District or County Councillor and the Parish Council, especially on Planning.

I know you will receive further letters of objection from Mr Wayne Emerson, Mrs Katrina Best and Mr Robert White on aspects of community identity and electoral equality as well as proposing solutions. I would thoroughly endorse their comments and suggestions, and I hope that you will agree that it makes little sense in regurgitating all the points that they make in their letters, I would rather comment about practical issues that I encounter as a District and Parish Councillor, which I hope you may find helpful.

As I have mentioned, we have two District Councillors in the existing Danehill etc. ward and, although I am a member of Fletching Parish Council, wearing my District Councillor hat I do attend the other Parish Council meetings in the ward – being Danehill, Maresfield (because the Nutley ward lies in that Parish) and Isfield. Little Horsted does not have a Parish Council but falls within the District ward. I therefore see first hand how unnecessary duplication of my and other Councillors time happens. As an example, for the current Maresfield Parish Council meetings, 5 District Councillors and 2 County Councillors could attend, and there was one notable parish council meeting there when the number of County and District Councillors
outnumbered the Parish Councillors attending! I therefore thoroughly support Wealden’s move
to have single member wards, although in your draft recommendations in other Districts in
Wealden I do see that you have proposed two two-member wards. Nevertheless, the
establishment of this precedent may provide two of the possible solutions to realigning the
Uckfield West ward although, from my experience, this is certainly not the ideal from a practical
point of view, as it mostly leads to ineffective local governance. The argument for two member
wards may however be slightly different in a denser populated and less spread out urban area.

For the areas of Piltdown that are threatened with being annexed to make up electoral numbers,
and to justify the new proposed Parish ward of Shortbridge, this in turn to justify the territorial
link between Isfield Parish and the Rocks Park and Bell Lane Industrial Estate areas of Uckfield,
west of the A22 by-pass, this would result in the Shortbridge part of Fletching parish being in
another District ward to the rest of the Parish, as well as being in another County division.
Therefore, two different County Councillors and two different District Councillors would be
responsible for representing Fletching Parish Council, since Fletching parish and its electorate
would be split between the proposed Danehill & Fletching and “Uckfield West & Isfield” District
Wards, and also between two newly created County districts – Danehill & Fletching and
“Uckfield North with Isfield”. These latter councillors would only be representing approx. 100
Fletching electors out of 2,800 in the Uckfield West District ward, and 100 out of approx. 9,000
in the Uckfield North County division. Apart from regarding this as ineffective local governance
through duplication of Councillors time for tiny percentages of Fletching electors, it will also
lead to extra administration for the Parish Council and confusion as to who is responsible for
what, especially on highways issues where a road/lane goes through two district/county wards.
One could surmise that Shortbridge issues might not practically be top of the Uckfield West and
Uckfield North Councillors’ list of priorities.

I would hope that you would consider the very different issues that confront these urban and
rural Councillors. From a District Councillor point of view for Fletching, we have planning issues
of AONB, Conservation areas, implications of Ashdown Forest conservation and Habitats
Regulations, as well as Agricultural applications. These are completely different to planning
issues in an urban area, which need to consider commercial/retail and new housing
development in accordance with Wealden’s intended Local Plan. There is no intention for any
new housing in Fletching in the Local Plan, which rather questions the validity of the 5% growth
rate in electors that is being used for the ward by 2021. However, more about that later in this
letter. There might be the odd agricultural barn conversion into a residence or garage
conversion for ancillary use to a main dwelling, but AONB and Ashdown Forest considerations
will very severely restrict, if not deny, any new housing development in Fletching, and indeed in
Danehill and Chelwood Gate. In contrast, Uckfield has over 1000 new houses planned for
delivery in the medium to long term, and by 2021 Wealden’s planning Department estimate
around 250 (one quarter) of those houses might be built out by then.

I hope therefore you can appreciate that the Shortbridge ward of Fletching has very few
interests in common with urban Uckfield in terms of the day-to-day issues that face a District
Councillor.

Similarly from a County perspective, I have seen that highways issues tend to be the most time
consuming. For the rural area of Fletching, it is speeding on country lanes and roads,
conservation of grass verges, cutting back overhanging trees in country lanes, grass/hedge
cutting to improve visibility, quiet lanes, maintenance of footpaths and bridleways through the
countryside, the dangers of recreational cycling (we had the unfortunate instance of an
organised timed event sweeping through the High Street on a Sunday morning, frightening a
horse being ridden by a child that reared up, the horse breaking its leg and having to be put down). None of these issues would you be likely to have in urban Uckfield. Are we to expect a County Councillor representing 8,400 urban electors to be giving priority to these rural issues facing 100 Fletching electors, or indeed the 500 Isfield electors?

Turning to easily identifiable boundaries, it does seem self-evident looking in detail at the proposed map, that the way that the roads and lanes that have been reapportioned to find 100 electors within Shortbridge to justify a new Parish ward, cannot be considered as providing clearly identifiable boundaries nor indeed do they have any natural boundaries.

With respect to solutions as to how District wards could be redrawn, it is not easy for any individual to do this unless they have considerable IT skills (which I have to confess I don’t!) and a good knowledge of the geography and communities in Wealden (which I would like to believe I do!), as well as being familiar with the various Guidance documents that you have on your website. At the end of the day I feel we have to trust in your skills to help us validate alternative solutions that are put forward.

It is now becoming quite puzzling as to why Wealden DC put forward the proposed Uckfield West/Isfield District ward, and the Ridgewood Little Horsted ward, both incorporating a small percentage of rural electors (yet a substantial rural area in terms of geographic size) into predominately urban wards. The existing wards in Uckfield would seem to me to have had the ability to be redrawn without requiring electors from the rural areas to the west. I believe Mr Emerson’s letter illustrates this very effectively. Even within the proposed urban part of Uckfield West, unnatural boundaries are being suggested, viz the small section of Uckfield New Town to the south west of the natural boundary of the River Uck and the old railway line. It would therefore seem logical and quite possible for the whole of urban Uckfield to be redrawn, in keeping with the other towns and urban areas in East Sussex, and this time adhering to natural boundaries such as the A22, to provide 4 (or even 5, depending on projections/ratios) District Councillors. You would then have several options of how to divide Uckfield while adhering to the figures – I believe it would be possible to create four single member wards, or two single member wards and a two-member ward, or indeed two two-member wards. Whilst not advocating two-member wards generally, there could be a greater argument that they are less ineffective in governance in an urban area, because of proximity and shared interests.

The western side of Uckfield has the most easily identifiable constructed boundary being the A22 by-pass, and in Wealden’s proposed Local Plan covering development until 2037, no new housing is being proposed west of the A22. Therefore, to draw rural Little Horsted, Isfield and a third of Piltdown into urban Uckfield simply does not make sense. It is also regrettable that Wealden in their original proposal did not appear to appreciate the consequences of annexing the Copwood part of Fletching Parish into the Uckfield West ward, in that it would require the need for the creation of a viable Parish Ward within Fletching, hence the need to annex further electors from Piltdown. If I had known that at the time, I certainly would have made representations. Subsequently, after receiving your Draft recommendations, it appears that your Guidance can permit a Detached ward, which could in theory provide a solution and is what Wealden are suggesting, but it is clear from my conversation with you that this is not your favoured option.

I am not sure that Wealden Council fully appreciates your position over a Detached ward and whether they have had any similar contact with you to be aware of your perspective after you published the Draft Recommendations. Perhaps they should have understood it was a potential sticking point, and more time then could have been spent on exploring other solutions, much as
Mr Emerson and Mrs Best have only recently been able to do. In the light of their subsequent work, and my own additional research, I hope you can understand why I now thoroughly support a preferred option of a Danehill/Fletching (including all of Piltdown/Isfield/Little Horsted) District ward, rather than Wealden’s proposal of a detached ward. Unfortunately, their response to your Draft recommendation was agreed at a full Council meeting last month and I understand cannot be changed now before June 16th. Another regrettable factor is that ESCC’s very recently published response to your recommendations for new boundaries for County Council divisions in Wealden is not in line with Wealden’s counter-proposal and so does not provide coterminosity. For your information, five members of Wealden District Council are also ESCC County Councillors!

Thankfully now Mr Emerson and Mrs Best have had the time and the diligence to explore other options to Wealden’s proposals, with the redrawing of Uckfield and its wards to remain urban and be contained westwards within the A22 by-pass, and therefore not splitting any parishes (e.g. Fletching) nor any villages with shared amenities and interests (e.g. Piltdown; Isfield & Little Horsted) nor encroaching on the rural areas of Isfield, Fletching and Little Horsted, so this most certainly becomes the preferred option.

In accordance with their calculations, it does seem a very real possibility to retain Isfield, Little Horsted and the threatened third of Piltdown within a redrawn Danehill/Fletching/Isfield/Little Horsted District ward, together much as they are currently, though without Nutley which would stay part of the new District Ward of Maresfield (as per your current draft proposal) and with the sparsely populated (around 180) “Weir Wood” area west of Forest Row being rejoined with Forest Row. I sincerely hope that, with your assistance, this ward can be substantiated.

If I could make one point about electoral numbers projected in 2021, I would have exactly the same query about the 5% growth in electors being a realistic figure for Danehill and Chelwood Gate, or whether it is an over-estimation. Danehill and Chelwood Gate are even closer to the Ashdown Forest and have areas of AONB. Whilst not being party as to how the 2021 elector projections have been arrived at for Wealden, it does seem that a standard % just over 5% has been used for many rural areas, and these may not reflect actual specific conditions in individual wards, such as AONB and Ashdown Forest considerations.

I sincerely hope that matters have not progressed too far for you to be able to re-examine and re-draw your draft recommendations to reflect all of the issues highlighted and to meet your criteria for electoral equality, community identity, easily identifiable and natural boundaries, and effective and convenient local government, which unfortunately I do not feel your current draft recommendations meet.

I would, of course, be very happy to discuss or clarify any points that I have made in this letter should you so wish, and my contact details are given below.
Dear Ms Starkie,
I understand you are the Review Officer in the above matter. I am writing to you to object to the current draft recommendations for a new West Uckfield and Isfield ward.
I have lived with my family at [redacted], for over 20 years and worked locally at Chailey Heritage for over 30 years. I therefore know the area very well.
Piltdown is not a nucleated settlement like most Sussex villages. Rather it is based around Piltdown Common, formerly of the Maresfield Estate, for which many of the houses were related. It may not appear as a village but it has a strong sense of community with a vibrant residents group. It has strong community links with Fletching, the church, local shops and pubs. Splitting Piltdown into separate parts for the purpose of squalling up electoral numbers would be divisive and undermine community links.
Piltdown has no deep historic or community links with Rocks Park and west Uckfield. There are, in my experience, no shared community relationships.
It seems to me that the draft proposals fail to meet many of the key statutory objectives. These will not reflect the identity and interests of local communities.
Regards
Mrs Christine Russell-Vick.

Chris Russell-Vick [redacted]
Dear Sirs,

As a resident of the parish of Isfield, in the Wealden District Council area, I am disturbed by the proposed re-drawing of Wealden District and East Sussex County Council ward boundaries by the Boundary Commission. As I understand it, the criteria used in this are:

i) to equalise elector numbers
ii) to reflect community identities and interests
iii) to be based on easily identifiable boundaries
iv) to help deliver convenient and effective local government.

With the exception of the first of these, which I shall address in turn, the proposals fail to achieve these objectives.

Isfield and the neighbouring parish of Little Horsted have long-standing, deep community relations (for example, the school for the children of both parishes is in Little Horsted; the pre-school for both is in Isfield; as Little Horsted has a Parish Meeting not a Parish Council, residents are eligible to stand for election to the Isfield Parish Council; the local pubs are both in Isfield, but are supported by regulars from both parishes; the Isfield Community Enterprise scheme is supported by shareholders from both parishes), and yet the proposed changes would split them into two different wards. Furthermore, both of these wards would be a hybrid of urban and rural populations, and the rural elements (Isfield and Little Horsted) would both be in a significant minority, leading to the likelihood that their voice would cease to be heard, swamped by the urban concerns of Uckfield.

The A22 Eastbourne road to the north and east is a natural boundary between the rural parish of Isfield and the urban centre of Uckfield. The proposed West Uckfield and Isfield ward would break this boundary, thus allowing the urban area to leak out into the rural surroundings. In all other cases in East Sussex, the urban areas have been confined within their own clearly defined boundaries. It is inappropriate to vary this policy in the case of Uckfield.

Currently, the district and county councillors for Isfield represent a rural ward (Danehill and Fletching) which ensures that they have an understanding of the requirements of a rural population. Mixing rural and urban parishes would destroy that commonality of interest, probably to the detriment of the rural population, which is hardly conducive to convenient or effective (or even fairly representative) local government.

I understand that the parish councils of Isfield and Fletching and the Little Horsted parish meeting have proposed an alternative solution which maintains the current
rural ward of Fletching/Danehill/Isfield/Little Horsted while conforming to the numerical constraints which have to be followed. I would urge you to reconsider and accept their alternative proposal, in the interests of the rural communities.

Geoffrey Sambrook
The exclusion of Hankham from the Pevensey parish will deprive Hankham of its longstanding historic connection with Pevensey and its established patterns of representation and interest. The inclusion of Hooe with Pevensey makes no sense either for the same reasons. These proposals are anti-democratic as they will weaken any effective voice and representation for Hankham and Hooe at District level. Please restore these two villages to their traditional civic parishes of Pevensey and Ninfield respectively.

Abigail Sargent
Marsh Hall, Church Lane
Dear Ms Starkie

I am writing to express my objections to the draft recommendations for the new ward boundaries in relation to the Parish of Fletching and the County ward of Danehill, Fletching and Nutley.

The recommendation to create a new ward of West Uckfield and Isfield would mean splitting Piltdown in two. This would be mixing a rural environment with an urban one and likely changing the culture of both over time.

The proposed boundary changes would compromise both rural and urban communities with no advantage for either.

I would urge the commission to leave Piltdown, Fletching, Isfield and Little Horsted as they are so that their identities and character are not changed and lost for ever.

Yours sincerely
Elizabeth Sargent
Dear Ms Starkie

New Ward Boundaries for Wealden and East Sussex

I write as Chair of the Governors of Fletching Church of England Primary School to pass on strong objections to the draft recommendations for new ward boundaries in relation to the Parish of Fletching and the existing County ward of Danehill, Fletching and Nutley.

The proposals to transfer a measurable proportion of Piltdown into the new ward of West Uckfield would reduce the school's catchment area. We are a small school of approximately 80 pupils and like so many of a similar size, we are permanently challenged by rising costs and ever tightening governmental budgets. These proposed changes would create additional pressures for attracting new pupils.

I urge the Boundaries Commission not to inadvertently add to the list of schools forced to close by demographics.

Yours sincerely

Richard Sargent

Chair of Governors
Fletching Church of England Primary School
Dear Emily,
I’ve been given your email address to lodge an objection to the proposed boundary changes in the Wealden District.
I object to Isfield being lumped in with Uckfield as we are a rural farming community and have many different concerns to the urban densely populated nearby town.
Many Thanks,
Adele
Dear Emily,
I should like to raise my objections to the proposed boundary changes which include Isfield in the outskirts of Uckfield.
We are a rural area, and not a part of a “Greater Uckfield” whose issues are by their nature more urban. We are for the most part self contained. People, here, only visit Uckfield for the Bank, school and Supermarket and no more. Uckfield is no more part of our everyday thinking, than we are part of theirs.
We should remain in a constituency with other villages, of a similar size, where the issues they live with (rural crime, response-times of emergency services, road repairs, and out-reach services) are the same as ours. To include us in a predominantly urban constituency would be to bury us democratically.

Kind regards

Pete Scantlebury
To whom it may concern;

You have invited the public to comment on the proposed changes to the boundaries within the ward that I live in.

I have some concerns about the proposal which I would like taken into account as this is reviewed further.

Firstly the proposal fundamentally does not fit into the stated size of wards that you, yourselves have put forward as a maximum.

By making the changes you would propose the ward is by far the biggest in the area and significantly over the maximum number of electorates per ward. Whilst I can understand and support the desire to reduce the number of councillors the fact that Ninfield is on the periphery of the ward does not mean that it should be simply added into an area because it is difficult to make the numbers worked. I have come to this conclusion by the way the ward has been named 'Horam and the Eastern Villages'
The size of this ward does not appear to take into account the WDC preferred option for their Local Plan which would significantly increase this further if it came to fruition, although I appreciate that the consultation revealed that almost all respondents were against WDC's preferred option.

Ninfield is a small, vibrant, community spirited rural village which is already well aligned with Hooe and Wartling. They are all agricultural villages and depict quintessential English Village life. This does not sit well with the towns that you are proposing Ninfield sits in the ward with. Herstmonceux is a busy market town some 5/6 miles distant from Ninfield with Windmill Hill and Boreham Street between them. It is difficult to comprehend that this would work well as the fundamental requirements for these areas are different.

Children in Ninfield and Hooe have, since the school was closed in Hooe, shared the same school in Ninfield with a bus to and from Hooe each school day. Moving Hooe into a ward with Pevensey and Westham does not seem logical as the A259 forms a barrier as vehicles travel from Bexhill to Eastbourne and beyond and again it is difficult to see how this could facilitate anything but would end up isolating Hooe.

Having looked at the statistics printed it is difficult to understand how the numbers calculate out as you suggest, it implies that Hooe has a larger impact than Herstmonceux?
The doctors surgery in Ninfield also serves residents of Hooe, it is not fathenable that sick residents of Hooe would travel to Pevensey for a GP consultation.

In summary, due to the district boundary with Rother it would seem the most practical to recognise this small area of Wealden as a ward in its own right.

With Kind Regards
Jackie Scarff
Resident of Ninfield
Dear Sirs

East Sussex County and Wealden District Electoral Reviews

My family have been landowners in the immediate area for 200 years. We have an Estate of some 2,500 acres. Most of our land is in Newick or Barcombe but we have some land in both Chailey and Isfield.

I write to you in the context of our land in Isfield. It comprises about 250 acres bounded by the Rover Ouse on the west, by the Isfield/Shortbridge road on the east, by Isfield Place on the south and by Buckham Hill House on the north. We own Buckham Hill Farm, Lodge Wood, Rocky Wood and residential property.

The Boundary Commission have published draft recommendations relating to Isfield and on behalf of my own family and many of those who work on our Estates, I wish to object to the proposals of the Boundary Commission. Many others share my views and my objections.

Our reasons for objecting include the following:-

1. Isfield is an ancient and historic community, with its own identity. Its issues are rural and not urban. It makes no sense at all to join part or all of rural Isfield with urban Uckfield – as it proposed by the Boundary Commission.

2. Likewise, it makes no sense at all to allocate as is proposed, Little Horsted, which has always had intimate ties with Isfield, to a ward which is entirely separate from the ward allocated to Isfield.

3. Electoral equality can easily be satisfied without an urban community being amalgamated with a rural community. “Greater Uckfield” must surely have enough electors in its own right?

You may ask what we would prefer to the proposals of the Boundary Commission. The answer is that we would prefer Isfield to remain with Little Horsted and that both should be part of the revised Danehill and Fletching rural ward. That ward would have easily identifiable and sensible boundaries.

Yours faithfully

John R Slater

This email has been scanned by BullGuard antivirus protection.
For more info visit www.bullguard.com
Dear Sir/Madam,

In the proposed boundary changes we appear to have been cut off from Waldron. In many places there is no boundary between properties in Cross in Hand and Waldron and many of the activities in Waldron include Cross in Hand residents for example the WI, Cricket and Rugby. Waldron has the Cricket Club and Cross in Hand the Rugby ground for example

Waldron and Cross in Hand share one Neighbourhood Watch for the area. Many of the Neighbourhood Watch committee members live in Cross in Hand the same applies to the Cricket Club.

The residents of both villages consider we are one village despite there are two different names, please do not separate an area which has been together for as long as people can remember.

yours faithfully

Michael Scruby
Re: New Ward Boundaries for Wealden and East Sussex

Dear Madam

I write to you to express my strong objections to the draft recommendations for new district ward boundaries for Wealden. My specific area of objection is in relation to the Parish of Fletching and the existing ward of Danehill, Fletching, Piltdown, Nutley, Isfield and Little Horsted. We feel the concerns highlighted below are much more important than reaching an arbitrary ‘acceptable level of electoral equality’.

- They do not reflect the identity and interests of the Piltdown Local Community by splitting the community geographically within Piltdown.
- Piltdown has a very active Residents Association, which has brought the community together and instigated various initiatives to improve the environment. To have to deal with two separate County Councillors and District Councillors for proposals such as these is not effective local government. It would also undermine the value central and regional government placed on this type of important local, community activism.
- The creation of a Parish Ward for Shortbridge would mean electors in this newly created ward have only one vote in a Fletching Parish Council election, whereas before they had the ability to vote for up to nine Parish Councillors. This clearly produces an inequality of voting by limiting of choice between electors in both the different parts of the Piltdown community and the rest of Fletching Parish.
- The urban area of Uckfield should not stray west of the clearly identifiable boundary of the A22, which separates the rural areas of Fletching, Piltdown, Isfield and Little Horsted from Uckfield and its new development in Ridgewood.
- The concerns of a Shortbridge resident and elector such as myself are very different from that of an Uckfield resident and elector. It is unrealistic to expect an Uckfield based councillor with a large population in an urban area to have the time and capacity to deal with the issues of a small population in Shortbridge (120 residents) who will be removed, both geographically and in terms of need, from the majority of their electorate.

I believe all Piltdown electors should be kept within the same District and County Council wards with Fletching in a rural ward, which, for equality of electoral numbers, should comprise a District Council ward of Danehill, Fletching, Isfield and Little Horsted.

Yours faithfully
Julia and Gerald Shelley
From: Richard Sheppard  
Sent: 26 May 2016 18:18  
To: reviews <reviews@lgbce.org.uk>  
Subject: Proposed Ward Boundary Changes

To Boundary Commission

I email to object to the proposal to merge our Ward with Pevensey & Westham. The main reason being the significant geographic distance & the fact no community connection currently exists between our villages. Ninfield, Hooe & Wartling Ward currently operates very well and should not be changed.

To merge with Pevensey & Westham would be detrimental to the community of Hooe.

Regards

Richard Sheppard

The information in this communication is confidential and intended only for the addressee. If you are not the intended recipient any disclosure, copying or distribution of any part is strictly prohibited. Please notify us immediately by return email and delete any message/attachment(s). We accept no responsibility or liability for any loss or damage arising in any way from use of this email or any attachment(s).
Dear Sir/Madam

I refer to the review of ward boundaries of District Councils and am very concerned that it is being suggested that Hooe will no longer be with Ninfield and Wartling but be joined with part of Pevensey and the main urban area of Westham.

I am aware that the councillors in Wealden are being reduced from 55 to 45 and it is necessary to redraw the wards but I think the above suggestion may not have been given enough thought bearing in mind the nature of each parish.

I have lived in Hooe for 50 years and I feel no connection with Pevensey or Westham whatsoever, whereas, there is a strong connection between Hooe and Ninfield. These parishes (along with Wartling) are rural and mainly farming parishes with similar characteristics and work well together. Pevensey and Westham are larger coastal communities, identified by the Commission’s own words as “urban” and therefore, have totally different interests/characteristics to the village of Hooe. There is also a graphical separation of the A259 and Pevensey Levels which form a barrier between Hooe and Pevensey/Westham, whereas Hooe actually shares its boundaries with Ninfield and Wartling. I can see no affinity between Hooe and Pevensey/Westham. PLEASE DO NOT SEPARATE HOOE FROM NINFIELD.

As well as the above, Hooe has a very strong “community contact” with Ninfield. We share the same doctors and surgery, both Hooe and Ninfield churches are served by the same incumbent, Hooe children attend Ninfield pre-school and school and the scout group and Hooe residents use the post office at Ninfield as this is the closest one. My son and I attended “Mothers and Toddlers” at Ninfield and I still play badminton there. I know a lot of Ninfield residents but not one person in Pevensey or Westham.

Once more, may I implore you to keep Hooe and Ninfield together in the same ward - please do not separate them. I believe having the same representative for Hooe and Ninfield, as now, is far better for both villages rather than have separate representatives.

Yours sincerely

S A Shrub (Mrs)

P.S. My husband, Mr P Shrub totally agrees with the above and wishes to register the above objections in his name also.

P F Shrub (Mr)
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Wendy Sim
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: Little Horsted Parish Meeting

Comment text:

I oppose the Wealden draft proposal splitting Little Horsted and Isfield into different wards. These neighbouring villages, linked via a bus route, have a strong agricultural, community and societal bond which has been founded over many years. Little Horsted has no village hall so is invited to join Isfield interest groups. The primary school in Little Horsted has many children from Isfield, the nursery at Isfield likewise accommodating children from Little Horsted, and both parish churches share the same clerical team. As rural communities we have many similar issues and have jointly campaigned for speed restrictions and broadband enablement. We will be better served by the same councillor and feel our representation would be diminished by being aligned with areas of a different character with very different requirements.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
27th May 2016

Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Ward boundary changes – East Sussex County Council – Parish of Hooe

I understand that under the proposed boundary changes, Hooe is to be linked with the Parishes of Pevensey and Westham, instead of the current arrangement with Ninfield and Wartling.

Hooe, Ninfield and Wartling are close neighbours, geographically, and have very similar business and other activities. They are primarily based in agriculture, although the internet has enabled a number of other, varied businesses to grow alongside. Hooe, Wartling and to a lesser extent, Ninfield, have a shared problem with heavy vehicles (lorries and coaches) increasingly operating through their country lanes, which are totally unsuitable for this type of traffic. The availability of local shops has diminished almost to the point of extinction, as has public transport, although Ninfield does maintain a regular bus service.

Hoee children attend Ninfield pre-school and Ninfield Church of England Primary School; residents use Ninfield Post Office and Doctors Surgery as we have neither at Hoee; St Oswald’s Church Hoee and St Mary’s Church Ninfield share the same incumbent. Residents of both villages support Clubs and Groups in Ninfield and Hoee. Ninfield Memorial hall is used for concerts given by Hoee Silver Band and Soulcas Bells, Hoee Village Hall hold the monthly Open Group meetings. St Oswald Church which is a little larger than St Mary’s celebrate Carols at Christmas as well as other services attended by pupils of Ninfield School.

These three villages have a tradition of working together going back hundreds of years, due to both their proximity to each other and the wide-ranging similarities in their economies. They are, essentially, rural communities with similar economies and similar problems.

The challenges and problems experienced by Pevensey and Westham which is classed as a ‘seaside urban area’ are in stark contrast to Ninfield, Hoee and Wartling. They are far less reliant on agriculture and more dependent on the tourist and holiday trade, being very close to the coast, with good public transport (including main line railway stations) shops, extensive business parks and interesting old places to visit.
I am concerned, therefore, that the proposal to remove Hooe from its current association with its close neighbours and link it instead with Pevensey and Westham will have a detrimental effect on the village with regard to District Council decisions. Hooe is completely separated from Pevensey by 6 miles of open marshland and the ever busy main coastal road (A259) as well as all that I have discussed above, which makes the proposal to integrate it with Pevensey / Westham even more baffling. I suggest that it is better to have a ward made up of villages with similar physical, economic and geographic environments, as is currently the case, than to combine two with considerably contrasting backgrounds, as is being proposed.

The Hooe / Ninfield / Wartling ward has existed in perfect harmony within Wealden for very many years and I see no valid reason why this amalgamation should end. This is a natural unification of three villages that has existed for a very long time and should be respected as such. It would not benefit any of the five villages I have mentioned for this change to take place, on the contrary, it would probably be detrimental all round and I fear Hooe would loose it’s identity completely. Already the new proposed boundary is named as Pevensey and Westham on mention of Hooe.

I hope this proposal will be re-considered and Hooe, Ninfield and Wartling will continue to work in harmony has it has in past years.

Yours Faithfully,

Mrs H. Sinden
27th May 2016

Dear Sir or Madam

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I hope this proposal will be re-considered and Hooe, Ninfield and Wartling will continue to work in harmony as it has in past years.

Yours Faithfully,

Mrs H. Sinden
Starkie, Emily

From: Mayers, Mishka on behalf of reviews
Sent: 15 June 2016 09:28
To: Starkie, Emily
Subject: FW: Proposal to separate Isfield from Fletching and Piltdown

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

----Original Message-----
From: Ross Smither
Sent: 15 June 2016 08:10
To: reviews <reviews@lgbce.org.uk>
Subject: Proposal to separate Isfield from Fletching and Piltdown

I am a long term Resident of Isfield and gather I should register my objection to you about the proposal to include Isfield within the boundaries of Uckfield, separating us from Fletching.
Fletching, Piltdown and Isfield have similar demographics, environment and interests.
For some years I was a member of the Executive of Uckfield Chamber of Commerce and can state categorically that the interests of Uckfield are not compatible with rural concerns.
These clashes of interest can range from housing priorities to leisure facilities.
I am content to let Uckfield develop as it sees fit (albeit that the current High Street widening scheme is both costly, unnecessary and chaotic).
Isfield, Fletching and Piltdown should remain linked within the same boundary for the preservation of our concerns and the promotion of our shared and compatible interests.
My details are,
Mr Ross Smither,
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Hilary Smith
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I see that you are proposing a new area for Stone Cross. I live in [REDACTED] Stone Cross and I really don't understand how you have put the boundary to the east of my house, instead of including it in the new Stone Cross area. At present I am in Pevensey and Westham; I have no connection with this area. And the you propose to lump me in with Polegate Central. Its simply not logical. I would have thought that the boundary should follow Golden Jubilee Way not one of the roads within this estate. Also, there are about 100 dwellings being built on the other side of Dittons Road, and I think these should also be in the administrative area of Stone Cross.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Review Officer,

Dear Sir,

I have lived in Hooe for 73 years as a farmer. During this time Hooe and Ninfield have always been connected as very compatible together. Our churches, school, clubs and groups have always been joint efforts. The proposal to put Hooe with Pevensey and Westham is ill-thought as we have nothing in common with a semi urban district. There are the Pevensey Levels SSSI area
Between us, a distance of 4 miles with no habitation.

I ask you to leave things as they are, Hove, Nenfield and Wantling all small farming villages.

It has worked well for many years and should continue to do so.

Yours Faithfully

Neil C Smith
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Lin Squires
E-mail: [redacted]
Postcode: [redacted]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I live in the farthest reaches of Forest Row at present beyond Ashurst wood in Shovelstrode. I would find having a Hartfield councillor defeats the objective of a local councillor. Hartfield from the perspective of local services and issues is too far away. My daily activity and all the services I use are in Forest Row. I don't know how a Hartfield councillor could make informed decisions about our tiny part of Wealden when it is only located close by as the crow flies. I would even have to pass through a different district (Mid Sussex) and a different ward (Forest Row) to get to meetings in Hartfield. Forest Row is where my life happens please leave Shovelstrode in Forest Row so the local council can be truly local.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Michael Stedman
E-mail: [redacted]
Postcode: [redacted]
Organisation Name: [redacted]

Comment text:

Wealden sort to achieve single member wards. Horam is a single member ward now. You proposal for a two member ward is a step backwards.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Susan Stedman
E-mail: [redacted]
Postcode: [redacted]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I do not agree with your proposal of a Horam and Punnetts Town Ward. I support Wealden’s proposal of 1 Member Ward of Horam and Old Heathfield, which will be far more beneficial to those residents.

Uploaded Documents:

Download
Horam has always been a single member ward (as have the other wards they now wish to merge). Residents and the Parish Council alike have been used to exclusive representation where the Ward Member has to ‘serve’ only one parish council. Their last experience of the Electoral Commission’s boundary review (8 years ago?) left them with a County Councillor who has serve a minimum FIVE parish council districts. They are wary of accepting a similar position at District Level.

The poor connectivity between all the villages in this proposed ward will mean that the two members are likely to divide the duties between the parishes and to all intents and purposes with will become two distinct wards by default.

In addition, the changes proposed by the Electoral Commission appear to take no notice of the differing sociological and topographical of the existing wards they wish to put together.

Horam, designated as a Service Centre in Wealden’s Core Strategy and Review, and expecting many more than 400 houses in the next few years, is completely different from Rushlake Green and Punnets Town and the other rural villages.

It is unclear if the Boundary Commission fully understand the area and the extent of the new housing figures which, despite the ongoing LP Review, are already appearing in planning applications. Many of these new dwellings will have been built by 2019, necessitating a further review.
Dear Sirs,

Please see attached an email regarding BOUNDARY COMMISSION ELECTORAL REVIEW FOR WEALDEN AND EAST SUSSEX

Penelope Steel

Dear Sirs,

I am a resident of Isfield and have lived in this rural area for 40 years. I am writing to object to the proposal to include Isfield in a new "West Uckfield" ward.

My objections are as follows:

1. The A22 Uckfield bypass is a natural boundary between the urban area of Uckfield and the rural area of Isfield and Little Horsted.

2. The needs of the rural population of this area are completely different to the needs of the urban population in Uckfield, and because of the larger numbers in the urbanised area their voice will be heard more loudly than the voice of the rural community. Therefore, the rural area will suffer, and less effort will put into meeting the needs of our community.
3. It is important for this rural community, to remain RURAL and continue to be in the same District Ward with Danehill, Fletching and Little Horsted so that the needs of this rural community are properly reflected and catered for.

Yours faithfully,

Penelope Steel (Mrs)
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: lisa stevens
E-mail: 
Postcode: 

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I think that Horam should remain an individual parish rather than be combine with Punnets town

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
### Original Message

From: Mrs B Strevett  
Sent: 10 June 2016 22:37  
To: reviews <reviews@lgbce.org.uk>  
Subject: Electoral review of ward boundaries

Having lived in the village of Hooe for my entire life (84 years) I feel very upset to hear that the proposed boundary changes are to merge us with Pevensey and Westham. We have nothing in common with them. We are as the saying goes twinned with Ninfield, as we have to go there for all our wants viz post office, doctor, schools etc. Pevensey is miles from us across acres of marshland and the busy A259. I have seen many changes in local councils over the years but this proposal seems outrageous. From Barbara Strevett. Member of Hooe P.C. for many years.
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Matt Stribley
E-mail: [redacted]
Postcode: [redacted]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

The proposed Uckfield West & Isfield Ward makes no sense because it groups a rural village with the centre of a town, including an area of town that is due to have 1000 houses imposed upon it. Each has separate characteristics, demographics, requirements & wishes. I can't comment on the other wards beyond Uckfield but the various Uckfield & surrounding wards make more sense as they are than after the proposed changes.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: John Sully
Email: [Redacted]
Postcode: [Redacted]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

re the proposed changes in the Wealden plan re the eastern edge of Forest Row, ie in Rystwood Estate, would it not be much more sensible to have the Eastern edge defined as along the B2110 between Ashdown School and the Rystwood Farm bend rather than splitting off a few houses in Rystwood road. Numerically one is talking of a dozen or so houses and probably twice that number of people, to what avail? We are no more than a mile from Forest Row but five miles from Hartfield so what is the reason / benefit???

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Dear Madam

Re: New Ward Boundaries for Wealden and East Sussex

I write to you to express my strong objections to the draft recommendations for new district ward boundaries for Wealden as well as new county council divisions for East Sussex. My specific area of objection is in relation to the Parish of Fletching and the existing ward of Danehill, Fletching, Piltdown, Nutley, Isfield and Little Horsted.

These are my objections:

• I do not believe that the draft recommendations meet the three statutory criteria of the review process.
• They do not reflect the identity and interests of the Piltdown Local Community by splitting the community geographically within Piltdown.
• Piltdown has a very active Residents Association, which has brought the community together and instigated various initiatives to improve the environment. To have to deal with two separate County Councillors and District Councillors for proposals such as these is not effective local government.
• The creation of a Parish Ward for Shortbridge would mean electors in this newly created ward have only one vote in a Fletching Parish Council election, whereas before they had the ability to vote for up to nine Parish Councillors. This clearly produces an inequality of voting by limiting of choice between electors in both the different parts of the Piltdown community and the rest of Fletching Parish.
• The urban area of Uckfield should not stray west of the clearly identifiable boundary of the A22, which separates the rural areas of Fletching, Piltdown, Isfield and Little Horsted from Uckfield and its new development in Ridgewood.

I believe all Piltdown electors should be kept within the same District and County Council wards with Fletching in a rural ward, which, for equality of electoral numbers, should comprise a District Council ward of Danehill, Fletching, Isfield and Little Horsted.

Yours faithfully,

Hedley Tardrew
Dear Madam

Re: New Ward Boundaries for Wealden and East Sussex

I write to you to express my strong objections to the draft recommendations for new district ward boundaries for Wealden as well as new county council divisions for East Sussex. My specific area of objection is in relation to the Parish of Fletching and the existing ward of Danehill, Fletching, Piltdown, Nutley, Isfield and Little Horsted.

These are my objections:

• I do not believe that the draft recommendations meet the three statutory criteria of the review process.
• They do not reflect the identity and interests of the Piltdown Local Community by splitting the community geographically within Piltdown.
• Piltdown has a very active Residents Association, which has brought the community together and instigated various initiatives to improve the environment. To have to deal with two separate County Councillors and District Councillors for proposals such as these is not effective local government.
• The creation of a Parish Ward for Shortbridge would mean electors in this newly created ward have only one vote in a Fletching Parish Council election, whereas before they had the ability to vote for up to nine Parish Councillors. This clearly produces an inequality of voting by limiting of choice between electors in both the different parts of the Piltdown community and the rest of Fletching Parish.
• The urban area of Uckfield should not stray west of the clearly identifiable boundary of the A22, which separates the rural areas of Fletching, Piltdown, Isfield and Little Horsted from Uckfield and its new development in Ridgewood.

I believe all Piltdown electors should be kept within the same District and County Council wards with Fletching in a rural ward, which, for equality of electoral numbers, should comprise a District Council ward of Danehill, Fletching, Isfield and Little Horsted.

Yours faithfully

Lucy Tardrew
21st May 2016

Re: Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Dear Sir

I wish to object most strongly to the joining of Hooe and Pevensey Parishes in the current draft boundary review. In my former role as an elected member of East Sussex County Council (1997 - 2013) I represented both these parishes at various times. My change of role was precipitated by previous boundary changes.

There is no connection in any manner between these two parishes, and further more they are physically divided by the A259 – the continuation of the A27 main highway to Hastings – and the Pevensey Levels, the largest tract of wetland in East Sussex, an important National Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI).

Hooe has a natural affinity to the Parish of Ninfield that is just a few miles away. They share many attributes and locally are often regarded as one, although they have their own individual characteristics

Pevensey Parish is linked to the local areas of Pevensey Bay, Old Pevensey and Westham.

Pevensey Parish is dominated by the coastline – where William the conqueror landed – and is a tourist attraction. Hooe is a separate rural Parish surrounding a small traditional village. The character of these two parishes is totally different, with different challenges and different problems. The distance between the two will certainly lessen sensible public representation.

The suggested boundary change is totally unsuitable. I trust the Commission will re-examine the proposed change and retain the status quo. Hooe and Pevensey have no harmony and the proposed change would harm both communities.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Cllr Roger Thomas

Wealden District Council

Former Chairman of East Sussex
Wealden sub from reviews@  

From: Peter & Jean Thompson [REDACTED]  
Sent: 31 May 2016 10:49  
To: reviews <reviews@lgbce.org.uk>  
Subject: E.Sussex boundary review

We are householders in [REDACTED] in Wealden District Council area and are badly affected by the proposed boundary line which includes us in Uckfield West and Isfield. The manner in which this new line has been drawn causes great problems: you have divided the village of Piltdown which is a close community with its own residents association: you have divided the parish and the residents from their local church: you have separated our clubhouse from the actual golf course: we are only permitted 1 representative on Fletching Parish Council. This new boundary affects 130 electors which is minimal to a constituency but very important to electors who chose to live in a rural area and not in a town i.e. Uckfield. Who will properly represent country dwellers in this situation. Please reconsider the way you have drawn this boundary line.
I am a resident of [REDACTED] which it is proposed will become a "western" finger of west Uckfield ward. I am a member of the very active Piltdown Residents Association. Together with the Fletching parish we have a very lively and constructive programme-essentially involving the whole local community. I am also a playing member of the Piltdown Golf Club. The suggested split of the Piltdown community and the golf clubhouse from the golf course itself could mean that 2 councillors would be needed to represent our requirements. I feel very strongly that rural Golf Club Lane should remain allied to Fletching. It would have nothing in common with an urban Uckfield division. Would you please consider a status quo by leaving us as a part of a rural district ward making a country ward with Danehill, Isfield and Little Horsted and keep our association with Fletching. Thank you Peter H. Thompson
East Sussex County

Personal Details:
Name: Janna Todd
E-mail: [Redacted]
Postcode: [Redacted]
Organisation Name: Mayfield & Five Ashes Parish Council

Feature Annotations

Map Features:

Annotation 1: Boundary

Comment text:

Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council think that the northern boundary should coincide with the existing Parish Boundary so that all our residents share the same County Councillor and Ward Councillor for Heathfield and Mayfield. All other services are shared already including schools, transport network, retail, churches, clubs and societies.

 Uploaded Documents:
None Uploaded
Hello,

I would like to comment on the proposed Uckfield wards in particular the suggested Uckfield West & Isfield ward which as far as I can tell (although the map has so many lines on it is difficult to make out which road is which) will include the High Street of Uckfield and Bell Farm Lane etc. but also part of Fletching and Isfield. It is difficult to see how a councillor representing residents from a central town location and from highly rural areas will be able to understand, prioritise and deliver on the vast range of issues that residents from each area would have. It seems it would be better in terms of your cited aims (Ward patterns should reflect community interests and identities and boundaries should be identifiable) to group urban residents and rural residents separately.

Kind regards,
Melissa Tysh

Sent from Mail for Windows 10
To whom it may concern,

As a long standing resident of Golf Club, Lane Piltdown I am extremely concerned to hear that the Boundaries Commission are proposing to annex part of my lane into a new West Uckfield electoral ward.

Piltdown has a thriving community as part of the wider Parish of Fletching. The Piltdown Residents Association has been very active and, in my opinion, plays a vital role in our hamlet. The electoral breakup of Piltdown cannot be in the interests of the residents. The proposed changes to the electoral arrangements will effectively disenfranchise me from the rest of Piltdown and the parish of Fletching and mean that my current opportunity to vote for 9 parish councillors will be reduced to 1.

Piltdown is a rural area with associated issues. The proposed new ward is largely urban with very different concerns. It does not seem logical to pair the two. Similarly illogical to me is splitting a lane where I vote for a different district councillor to my neighbour.

I ask you to consider a different approach being to keep Piltdown electors within the same District and County Council wards with Fletching in a rural ward which, for equality of electoral numbers, should comprise a District Council ward of Danehill/ Fletching/Isfield/Little Horsted (much as it is now, but without Nutley) with 3,138 electors projected in 2021. The urban electoral area of Uckfield should not stray west of the clearly identifiable boundary of the A22, which separates the rural areas of Fletching, Piltdown.

Please acknowledge receipt of this e mail.

Yours

Jonathan Vening
Please reconsider your decision to support the Boundaries Commission’s proposal to split our community and endeavour to ensure that we can remain a community with common values and concerns.
To whom it may concern,

I have lived in Piltdown for nearly 23 years and I am very disturbed to hear that the Boundaries Commission are proposing to annex part of my lane into a new West Uckfield ward.

We have always had strong links with Fletching, Danehill and the Parish Council and have contributed and supported the community, in fact I have been on the church cleaning rota for more than 10 years.

Piltdown have their own Residents Association which has created an even stronger bond amongst the residents. Through the Piltdown Residents Association (PRA) we now have a village sign, we are looking at the speed limits through our village both on the country lanes and the A272 to the north and we have occasional suppers and “meet the residents” events at The Golf Club to cement our village relationships. It is difficult to understand how part of Piltdown and especially from my point of view, part of Golf Club Lane can be hived off to a West Uckfield ward. Clearly, my views and opinions as a rural resident are going to be completely different to those living in Uckfield. How can, for example, planning matters be dealt with, having such a strange split in our lane, set aside the rest of Piltdown? We are a rural community and Uckfield is an urban area and it is patently obvious that those living in West Uckfield and the associated County and District Councillors will have different views to ours in a rural environment. I feel that we will be more properly represented by Fletching Parish Council and urge you to reconsider the redrawing of electoral boundaries.

As a rural area, we obviously have stronger links with the rest of Piltdown and Fletching than we do with west Uckfield.

By moving us into a different ward you are disenfranchising me by taking away my voting rights reducing my ability to vote for 9 Parish Councillors, down to one. This creates an imbalance between residents of Piltdown depending on which Ward they are in.

Surely it makes more sense to keep all of Piltdown in the same District and County Council ward as Fletching as we have common concerns. There is a clear identifiable boundary between Piltdown, Fletching, Isfield, Danehill and Little Horsted from Uckfield, in the A22. If Nutley is excluded from this group, this would make the number of electors 3138.

With the projected growth of Uckfield likely to have 12272 electors by 2021, surely it could be split into wards of equal numbers, keeping the wards at an acceptable level. This will achieve the objectives sought.

Please reconsider your decision to support the Boundaries Commission’s proposal to split our community and endeavour to ensure that we can remain a community with common values and concerns.
Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Shirley Vening
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Susie Vogt
E-mail: [redacted]
Postcode: [redacted]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I would like to make a very simple point. Whilst I can understand the technical need to make wards 'roughly' equal in size, I would suggest that the weighting of this objective in terms of priorities should be less than the cultural and governmental/administrative objectives. I live in Chapel Row - currently along with Flowers Green - part of the Herstmonceux ward. This makes complete cultural and governmental/administrative sense - those of us who live in Chapel Row and Flowers Green are totally integrated into the Herstmonceux community; it takes us but a few minutes to walk there, it is our local shopping area, it is where our friends and our lives are. Your suggestion of reallocating Chapel Row and Flowers Green to Pevensey and Westham ward is incomprehensible in terms of cultural and governmental objectives. It is 15-20 minutes drive away vs. a couple of minutes walk to Herstmonceux, culturally Pevensey and Westham are worlds away. Most of us never even go there - it is just a zone we might drive through occasionally. I have to say that this suggestion smacks of people looking at maps and drawing neat boundaries without having the slightest understanding of how the communities work. Please would you listen to our very good Cllr Andy Long - who knows his ward - and when/if you have time, please come and visit Chapel Row and Flowers Green - then walk into Herstmonceux - then drive to Pevensey and think about what constitutes a community.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Dear Emily
I would like to register my concern that Piltdown is proposed to be split between Fletching and a new entity called Uckfield west.
Piltdown has had a long historical association with Fletching and see itself as an extension of that village albeit with a distinctive identity. To carve up Piltdown and place what is essentially a rural district within an urban one does not make sense for services, planning and the needs of either community.
Fletching Parish Council has been an excellent ambassador for Piltdown and it's residents and we would like to retain the status quo.
I would ask for this proposal to be shelved as quickly as possible.
Jon Wale and Terri Jackson

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.
Objection to the East Sussex County and Wealden District Electoral Reviews

Dear members,

We are writing to register our objection to the proposal to change the boundaries wards for Wealden and East Sussex that would affect the portion of Piltdown that is to be annexed into a new Uckfield West Ward.

Our objection is based on the negative impact that splitting the rural community of Shortbridge from the rest of Piltdown and incorporating it into the Uckfield West Urban ward, that is neither close geographically nor culturally, will have. We fear, that in the event of such an incorporation, the very real and active identity and community of Piltdown will be compromised, and feel that the newly created Shortbridge ward will be inadequately represented in the new council, and the needs of this rural community faces being overlooked in various policy decisions.

We believe that all Piltdown electors should be kept within the same District and County Council wards with Fletching as this is how they will best serve their local communities. Furthermore, we believe that the clearly identifiable boundary of the A22 should serve as an obvious geographical man made boundary that separates the Rural Community of Uckfield from the Rural area of Fletching and helps to preserve our Rural landscape.

Yours Sincerely

Shane Warriker and Ali Pery
I wish to object to the proposal to join the Parish of Hooe with Pevensey Bay.

The two parishes are totally different and divided by the very busy A259 road across Pevensey Levels.

Hooe is predominately agricultural with full time farming families and a scattered residential community. Pevensey is on the coast and mainly involved with tourism and visitors. The two parishes have nothing whatsoever in common and the proposal does not reflect local communities in any way.

The existing arrangement whereby Hooe is joined with two other "country" parishes makes good sense. But ideally Hooe should be linked with nearby Bexhill on Sea and moved into Rother District Council, who are already responsible for the policing.

Peter Watson
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Andy Waye
E-mail: [redacted]
Postcode: [redacted]

Organisation Name:

Feature Annotations

Map Features:

Annotation 1: Area 1, Rystwood Estate and other local properties

Comment text:

Dear Sir/Madam, I seriously question why there has been no communication through the letterbox informing us about the proposed parish boundary changes. What happened to democracy? The proposed redefinition of the boundary do not accord with having local representation. Area 1 (Rystwood Estate and other local properties) is part of a continuous housing area and is an integral part of the village of Forest Row. Arguments to the contrary have no validity. Between Forest Row and Hartfield (which is several miles away) there are large discontinuities in housing. The facilities in Forest Row are used by us on a daily basis and we need to have accountable councillors to whom we can direct questions and challenges on issues affecting us locally. Councillors attached to the Hartfield parish will have little inclination to devote their energy and time to issues miles away in another village. The desire to "balance" the numbers of electorate in the various parishes has, associated with it, no cogent, logical reasoning. The numbers may indeed be balanced but the representation will not. If I cannot take part in electing somebody to represent me locally I have had my democratic rights removed so this proposal to change the boundaries is undemocratic and should be rejected. May I remind you of information placed on your website, "We also aim to ensure that the pattern of wards reflects the interests and identities of local communities as well as promoting effective local government." Currently, I am able to walk to the village centre in ten minutes. It would take me over an hour to walk to Hartfield. Voting for somebody I don't have any confidence in to represent me would take a car journey. Voting for somebody I do have confidence in to represent me takes a short walk. The Rystwood Estate would be spread across two parishes rather than one making its management much more difficult. I urge you to reconsider this proposal and reject it. I also urge you to immediately publicise this proposed boundary change by first class mail to all affected properties. It is scandalous that this is seemingly being sneaked in by the back door. Best regards, Andy Waye

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
12th June 2016

The Review Officer (Wealden)
LGBCE
14th Floor
Milbank Tower
London
SW1P 4QP

Ref: Revised Ward Boundaries for Wealden and East Sussex

Dear Ms Starkie

I wish to express my strong objection to the draft recommendations for new district ward boundaries for Wealden as well as new county council divisions for East Sussex. I live in the Parish of Fletching that is within the existing ward of Danehill, Fletching, Nutley, Isfield and Little Horsted.

The creation of a new ward of West Uckfield and Isfield will effectively divide the village. The rural area of Piltdown will be absorbed into the larger urban area of West Uckfield that is situated on the other side of the A22 Uckfield bypass and remote from the remainder of the village.

I note in your own guidance “A good pattern of wards should: reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links. Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.”

There are no such links and certainly no identifiable boundaries. The villages of Piltdown, Sharpsbridge, Isfield and Little Horsted are rural while West Uckfield is urban with significant developed land and a totally different community identity. This is not just my view; it is the view of the office of National Statistics.

The proposed new boundary will mean Barkham Lane, Shortbridge Road, Sharpsbridge Lane and Golf Club Lane (every thoroughfare in the village) as well as Piltdown Golf Course will be split between Danehill/Fletching ward and the West Uckfield ward.

No way can this be described as “effective and convenient.”

There is an active Residents Association (PRA) in Piltdown whose mission statement “is to create a safe and supportive community for Piltdown.” Over the last few years it has successfully completed a number of projects for the benefit of the village and the surrounding areas.
The PRA runs events for residents of the village and its members have spent considerable time and effort integrating with the Parish Council and with the neighbouring village of Fletching. Piltdown residents have played a major part in the organization of the new Fletching Festival.

I fail to understand how the council will “deliver effective and convenient local government” if the boundary proposal is implemented.

As an example, if the Golf Club needed to consult their local councillor, they’d have to work with one Councillor for some issues and a different one if the issue related to a different area of the course. If the matter concerned the whole course, both councilors and council would have to be involved.

Presently the PRA has been working on a traffic survey and the erection of village “Gates”. This has required consultation with the relevant District and County councilors. In the future the consultations would have to be duplicated which is hardly delivering the aim of the Boundary Commission.

I realize that in the interests of efficiency and budgetary restraint that changes to local government must take place. However, I do not think that the proposed changes to Danehill, Fletching and Isfield will achieve the objective.

Uckfield is in transition as a town. There are significant plans to increase housing. This is not the case in the rural villages between the town and Ashdown Forest.

I wish there were a simple solution but mixing urban and rural wards just to make the numbers look right is not the way to go. Especially when villages are split and responsibilities duplicated.

I would sincerely suggest that Uckfield should be looked at as an entity in itself while the rural villages with their shared amenities and interests could be linked rather than divided.

I have concentrated on the effect of changes to District Ward boundaries but I believe that the changes to County Electoral divisions in East Sussex will have a similar detrimental effect. The divisions may differ but the issues are the same.

Yours sincerely

John Weddell
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Teresa Wenban
E-mail: 
Postcode: 

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I wish to lodge objections to the proposal to split Piltdown to create new wards. Whilst I appreciate the need to join West Uckfield and Isfield by taking in the Copwood area, I totally disapprove of the further split of Golf Club Lane, Shortbridge and Barcombe Lane. Although the split does not affect me personally, it affects neighbours and friends, particularly in their voting options. We have built up a strong community in our small village. This has been worked at over a number of years, and we feel very strongly that outsiders are be able to move boundaries to suit themselves. Piltdown residents association works alongside Fletching Parish Council and have highlighted Piltdown’s identity with village signs, village gates, speed surveillence and planting areas. Social events have also been held for Piltdown residents at the golf club to unite residents socially.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
14th Floor,
Millbank Tower,
London
SW1P 4QP

12th June 2016

Re: new Ward Boundaries for Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council Divisions

Dear Ms Starkie,

I have lived in [REDACTED] for coming up to 34 years and I do object to the proposals for dividing our community and losing our rights to vote for a full parish council.

Various residents together with the Parish council have formed a sub-committee from the Piltdown Residents Association and have carried out some sterling research and achieved equally good results in suggesting an alternative to the one proposed by the Boundaries Commission.

These results which have been sent to you by our District Councillor Mr Peter Roundell and Residents Wayne Emerson and Katrina Best have my full support.

I do hope that our responses will meet with your approval enabling us to continue with the incredible and unique community which we have

I remain

Yours sincerely

Barbara White
10th June

Re: new Ward Boundaries for Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council Divisions

Dear Ms Starkie,

As a resident for 33 years in [redacted], I have taken an interest in bringing our community together over the past six years, starting with when we objected to a Land raise site which had been proposed. This took four years of discussions with the Wealden District Council and The East Sussex County Council before they decided that we had some very strong alternatives and we won our case.

Following these discussions I personally came up with an idea to keep the residents relationships alive and I formed the Piltdown Residents Association in January 2014.

The association has had some very positive results from both the Wealden District council and East Sussex Police, as well as the East Sussex County council, which has amounted to 15 different projects being confirmed including road safety issues from Speed watch, Highways issues, signage and the monitoring of vehicles travelling along both Shortbridge Road and Golf Club Lane. This has led to further discussions with the Lead member of the East Sussex County Council with a decision to be taken in September 2016 on reducing the speed limits on these two ‘C’ class roads from 60mph to 40mph. Both of these roads have been mentioned in your proposal and would divide our community which is not what we have worked hard for.

Seven years ago we did not have any shared social interest with other Piltdown residents except for our historic 114 year-old golf club, but since we came together to fight the Land raise proposal and subsequently form the PRA, this has changed, with the community brought together regularly with various social events during the year and with fund raising to help us meet E.S.C.C. with matched funding. Should our community be divided, we will not only lose everything we have built up and value, but will find ourselves being forcibly linked with an Urban community with completely different interests and preoccupations to our own, and one in which decisions have to be taken by an Urban council opposed to a distinctly Rural council, with our residents therefore divided.

My concerns are that we will lose a fantastic community spirit which I strongly feel should never be considered as a possibility.

There has been a Parish Council meeting, Parish Public meeting and two residents association committee meetings discussing the Boundaries Commission proposals and three members, Peter Roundell (also one of our ward’s two district councillors and himself a resident and PRA member in the affected part of Piltdown), Wayne Emerson (a Piltdown resident/neighbour and PRA member in the Unaffected part of Piltdown) and Katrina Best (a Piltdown resident/neighbour and PRA member in the affected part of Piltdown), have carried out some very exacting work on suggesting alternatives and presented these ideas on the 09th June 2016 together with the recommendations that the Piltdown Residents Association unanimously agreed with and therefore as an individual I also strongly agree to and support these suggestions.
I therefore write to you to express my strong objections to the draft recommendations for new district ward boundaries for Wealden as well as new county council divisions for East Sussex. My specific area of objection is in relation to the Parish of Fletching and the existing ward of Danehill, Fletching, Nutley, Isfield and Little Horsted.

By creating a new ward of West Uckfield and Isfield the Commission has effectively split a village in two. Piltdown is a rural community of some 330 people spread over a relatively wide geographical area, which is part of the Fletching Parish. As a result of these factors there have been significant efforts made to ensure that there is an active, vibrant and supportive community spirit. The proposals take a significant part of the village and places it in the new West Uckfield Ward whilst the rest remains in Danehill and Fletching. This will create a group of rural electors mixed into an urban ward and portion of a village with no electoral link to its other component part.

I live in the portion of Piltdown that would be effectively annexed from the rest of Fletching as well as the remainder of the reconfigured Danehill and Fletching Ward, so am acutely aware of how the current draft proposals will adversely affect me personally and many of my friends and neighbours.

It is my strong belief that the draft recommendations do not meet the three statutory criteria of the review process and I urge you in the strongest terms to revise the plans to a more suitable solution. In this submission I will present my evidence as to why each criteria has not been well met and will attempt so far as is possible to present alternative solutions.
Criteria 1 Delivering Electoral Equality for Local Voters

The current proposals still do not well deliver electoral equality across the District.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft recommendations</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2021</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Number of councillors</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>Number of electoral wards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average number of electors per councillor</td>
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<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criteria 2 Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities

The Draft recommendations demonstrably fail to meet this criteria

Piltdown, Shortbridge, Sharpsbridge, Isfield and Little Horsted are obviously rural areas, whilst West Uckfield is an urban conurbation with significant developed land and a different community identity. This is not only my opinion, it is fact supported by the Office of National Statistics:

Fig1 – Rural / Urban Classification from Office of National Statistics

Residents Association

Piltdown Village has an active Residents Association (PRA) of which I am a member. Over the past few years, the PRA has successfully completed a number of projects for the benefit of the village and the surrounding areas. The PRA runs many events for residents of the village and its members have spent considerable time and effort integrating themselves with the Parish Council and with the neighbouring village of Fletching.

The screenshot below of the PRA website demonstrates the close nature of the work that the Residents Association does with the Parish Council. The website can be reviewed at www.pra2014.co.uk
The resident’s association also provides a social background to the community and has facilitated the making of many friendships within the village and the surrounding areas. These important functions would become harder to serve with a large section of our village being annexed into a mixed urban / rural ward.

Fig3 – Article about PRA in TN uncovered
Fletching Parish Council

As previously mentioned, Piltdown is a component part of the Fletching Parish. There are residents of Piltdown that have been elected to this Council and help to ensure fair and balanced governance for all electors in this Parish, and specifically the Piltdown community.

In the event that a chunk of Piltdown is moved into Uckfield West, we have been informed that this would alter the makeup of the Parish Council, in effect a single seat being associated with the new Parish ward of Shortbridge. This would mean that the balance of the Parish Council would be significantly in favour of electors in the village of Fletching as they would be able to elect eight councillors compared to Shortbridge’s one.

I believe that the draft recommendations also contravene the guidance given on Parish Councils. The extract below is from Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

(2) The recommendations must secure the following results— (a) every ward of a parish having a parish council (whether separate or common) must lie wholly within a single electoral area of the district council

I understand that the creation of a Parish Ward has been proposed to resolve this issue, I feel strongly that this is not appropriate in this situation.

School

The current catchment school for Piltdown is Fletching CE Primary School. Again this strengthens the link between the entire village of Piltdown and the Parish of Fletching. To re-draw the ward boundaries with a large section of Piltdown being outside of the ward of Fletching would cause concern over future schooling arrangements and governance. The School provides an obvious evidential link between the communities of Piltdown and Fletching.

Church

The Parish of Fletching is served by the Church of St.Andrew and St. Mary the Virgin which is located in the village of Fletching, again providing substantive evidence of the link between the two villages.

Fletching Parish Festival

This year the Festival will be held on 16th July and is a celebration of the entire Parish. Whilst the event is held in Fletching, many residents of Piltdown (including those that are in danger of being annexed into Uckfield West) volunteer their services to man the stalls, judge competitions and even to marshal the soap box derby that runs the length of the High Street. This event, and many others like it prove, without doubt, a clear and intrinsic link between the two communities.
Golf Club

Piltdown Golf Club is a locally renowned course, and makes use of the beautiful natural land around Piltdown Pond. With over 500 members the Golf Club is a hub of both sporting and social activity for Piltdown and the surrounding villages.

The draft recommendations are proposing the odd approach of having the Club House and other facilities in one ward and the course itself in another. This would not again not provide for the continuity of local community spirit.

Public Houses

The villages of Piltdown and Fletching are fortunate to be well served by some fantastic public houses (there are two pubs in Piltdown and another two in Fletching). These venues act as a focal point for the social activities of the communities. As a result, friendships within the community span the two villages as residents of Piltdown will often socialise in the Public Houses in Fletching and vice versa.
Criteria 3 Promoting effective and convenient local government

I do not profess to be an expert in the mechanisms of local government, however I would find it hard to believe that it would be easier to govern a ward that consisted of a somewhat random mix of rural and urban voters, many of whom would be disenfranchised as a result of this process, than a cohesive, rural or urban only ward.

The draft recommendations would also significantly alter the makeup of the Parish Council, again giving rise to complications in government. I would think that any reasonable person would agree that it would be easier to govern a group with common goals, beliefs and sense of community than anything more divided.

The division of a community can only make government more complicated. A case in point here is the Golf Club. In the event that they needed to interact with their local councillor, they’d have to work with one Councillor for some issues and a different one if the issue related to a different part of their facility. This cannot be said to be effective or convenient local government.

The Residents Association has been able to deliver on many initiatives which have benefited the community. These include projects such as the Village Sign, a Traffic Speed Survey and the commissioning of Village “Gates”. These have all required liaison with the relevant District and County Councillors. If the Village needed to deal with two separate sets of District and County Councillors to achieve these type of project in the future, there would be considerable duplication of effort, in turn increasing the burden of government on the tax payer.

Some of the borders in the North West of the new Uckfield West and Isfield Ward are positioned somewhat confusingly on a map, with no discernible or understandable geographical boundary. This is contrary to the LGBCE’s stated aim to use natural demarcation of wards where possible. This again reduces the convenience of local government.

A Proposed Solution

In an attempt to show that it is possible to create a warding structure for the Wealden District I present below a high level approach. I have used the electoral data available on your website, but it is not possible to accurately define exact electors in some areas due to the redrawing of existing ward boundaries.

I would expect that the LGBCE have staff significantly more skilled in this technical exercise than I, and as such this is presented as a guide to what might be possible under the more finessed hand of your staff.
Uckfield

It is my view that Uckfield is an Urban Centre and as such should be ring-fenced separately from the rural areas that surround it. There is precedent for this in Crowborough, Hailsham, and Heathfield.

There is an area to the North of Uckfield that is in the Uckfield North Ward in the draft proposals, this is highlighted in red below. I am not familiar with this area and am therefore not best placed to recommend whether it should be part of Uckfield or Maresfield. It should be noted that this area could easily be placed in the new Buxted ward if this achieved better electoral equality.

This would give a total size of 12,782 electors (assuming the red shaded area is not included). Using a total of 4 councillors this would be within the tolerance area for Electoral Equality, would meet the requirement for reflection of local community and identity and would provide a convenient and efficient means of government. To the west there is a natural border point in the A22 road, to the east a border is formed by a mixture of Rivers and Railway line. This again meets the criteria for natural boundaries where possible.

As the Elector numbers for Uckfield are difficult to interpret as a result of the changing ward boundaries within Uckfield I have not attempted to segregate the Uckfield area into individual Wards, but I assume that the data available to you would make this a relatively straightforward task.
Danehill, Fletching and Isfield

These three communities share much in common and have historically been grouped together. There are four main Parishes within this proposed ward although I believe that there is significant interaction between Isfield and Little Horsted and that the two Parishes identify themselves as linked in spirit, as well as in some key practical ways (e.g. shared amenities and a shared parish). These rural communities also all share similar beliefs and would therefore be efficient to govern.

In order to provide for Electoral Equality the Polling District of Nutley (WBJ) remains in the Maresfield Ward as per the Draft Recommendations. The Polling District of Weir Wood (WFE) returns to the Forest Row ward. This would also ensure that the Parish and District electoral boundaries achieve conterminosity.

Summary of Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Electors in Year</th>
<th>Variance from Target</th>
<th>Electors in 2021</th>
<th>Variance from Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uckfield</td>
<td>11,732</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12,782</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danehill, Fletching</td>
<td>2,965</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3,138</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variances above are within the thresholds deemed acceptable by LGBCE as demonstrated by its Draft Recommendations. Therefore this proposal meets the requirement for Electoral Equality.

In conclusion I would reiterate that the current draft proposals are not suitable for the residents and electors of Pitdown and Uckfield. I have presented evidence of the reasons that the proposals breach the criteria set out for the LGBCE’s work and I have given a high level, layman’s proposal for how this issue could be resolved. I sincerely hope that this information is helpful to the LGBCE in its
aim to produce a recommendation that is suitable for all the residents and electors of Wealden District.

I understand that the existing review of County Electoral Divisions would require significant review if it is found that the current district is not fit for purpose as per my comments above. I understand the need for coterminosity between district and council wards and would therefore like to register my objection to the recommendations for the County Electoral Divisions for East Sussex in their current state. I believe that all of the points I have raised in this letter apply generally to the East Sussex County draft recommendations as well. They show Uckfield, currently a single urban county council district, being re-divided and renamed to incorporate sections of surrounding rural areas including a section of Piltdown/Fletching Parish. The divisions are different, yet the issues and my objections are similar, as are the solutions. While I understand that conforming to the required ratio of electorate per councillor is a challenge, I also believe it is possible and can work.

However you and your team approach the requirement to modify the draft recommendations, I believe that it is essential to begin by ringfencing Uckfield as an urban area that can be subdivided in a number of ways to adhere to the numbers. It would also then no longer be an anomaly in our region, but would be in alignment with the other urban centres in Wealdon and East Sussex, e.g. Crowborough, which remain contained as urban areas in your current new proposals, with an urban-dwelling electorate being served by councillors who understand and can advocate for their interests. Similarly, it would ensure that the neighbouring rural areas and their electorate remain protected with their unique interests properly represented, and that no parishes or communities are separated.

I would be very happy to have further conversation with LGBCE if this would be useful during the review period and I’m happy to provide further evidence or clarification as required.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert J. White

Tele: [Redacted]

Emai: [Redacted]
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Mark Wiggins
E-mail: 
Postcode: 

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

Hello. As Heathfield is a much larger town than punnets town and horam, I can't see the logic of splitting Heathfield up into small chunks and placing Punnets Town and Horam together to make a even bigger district. Surely it would make more sense to keep Heathfield as it is and move the outliers into adjacent larger districts.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
East Sussex County

Personal Details:

Name: Richard Withers
E-mail: [redacted]
Postcode: [redacted]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

Why take the principle town of Forest Row out and replace by the small village of Hartfield to name a huge area of East Sussex. Forest Row should remain as the named division of this part of East Sussex, this area is already isolated on the northern boundary of East Sussex and there is a great tendency to ignore the wishes of the residents of this area and this current proposal reduces Forest Row's status even more.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Richard Withers
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: 

Feature Annotations

Map Features:

Annotation 1:
Comment text:
We have redrawn the area from the River Medway to include the houses in Hartfield Road and the whole of the Rystwood Estate which should rightfully be included in the Forest Row Parish boundary. These houses are within one mile of Forest Row village and at least 5 miles from Hartfield, Forest Row being the education, shopping and social centre for these houses. The proposed boundary changes splits the Rystwood Estate into two boundary sections which will create friction and an imbalance within the estate.

Uploaded Documents:
None Uploaded
Wealden District

Personal Details:

Name: Christopher Woodham
E-mail: [Redacted]
Postcode: [Redacted]

Organisation Name: 

Comment text:

I was very concerned to hear that the parish boundaries for my area would be changing. We are a small village community and feel that if we were merged with an area from west Uckfield, our views on any future matters may go unnoticed or out voted by a larger population from a town. We have nothing against anyone from Uckfield and enjoy shopping there, but fear that they would not consider how matters would effect the structure or lifestyle of our village. We have a very good association with Little Horsted, and as two small villages together we do have a voice. If the parish boundaries were to change then neither one of us would have a loud enough voice in future discussions. Also by changing the boundaries the intake to Little Horsted school would be affected too, meaning local residents may struggle to get a place in the school over someone that is not even in the local area. I feel the county council should reconsider this proposal and keep Isfield and Little Horsted under the same Parish, a small village Parish and place Uckfield together as one town parish.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded