

The Review Officer (Uttlesford)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

June 26, 2013

Re: Uttlesford District Boundary Consultation

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing on behalf of WeAreResidents.org – a local residents group based in Saffron Walden - to state our objection to the draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements in Uttlesford on the basis that it **may lead to under representation of voters** in certain wards, including Saffron Walden, at district level.

We believe that this has arisen as the recommendations are based on inaccurate or out-of-date data provided by Uttlesford District Council. Indeed, the electoral register as at May 2013 showed that two of the polling districts in Saffron Walden **already had a higher electorate in the May 2013 than the underlying data provided suggested would be resident in 2018** as evidenced below:

Polling District	Description of Area	Parish Ward	Borough Ward	Electorate 2012	Electorate 2013	UDC Forecast 2018
ANA	Audley North	Audley	Saffron Walden Audley	1293	1294	1320
ANB	Audley South	Audley	Saffron Walden Audley	2591	2667	2656
AOA	Castle South-East	Castle	Saffron Walden Castle	1736	1738	1862
AOB	Castle South-West	Castle	Saffron Walden Castle	1816	1784	1962
AOC	Little Walden	Castle	Saffron Walden Castle	187	181	201
APA	Shire North	Shire	Saffron Walden Shire	1826	1994	1890
APB	Shire South	Shire	Saffron Walden Shire	2492	2492	2748

Your recommendations are based on the assumption that Saffron Walden’s voting population will grow at 5.8% between 2012 and 2018 – around half the rate of the district overall (11%). This is clearly inconsistent with the spatial strategy for growth of the district as referenced in Uttlesford’s draft local plan which focuses the majority of future housing growth for the district in the major settlements of Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden.

We have conducted our analysis of the likely growth in electorate for Uttlesford based on:

- Electorate for each ward as at the May 2013 county council elections
- Edge Analytics data for demographic forecasts for Uttlesford
- Likely future housing locations based on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment provided to support Uttlesford’s draft Local Plan
- Recent planning applications in the district.

Whilst our analysis suggests that the overall size of the electorate in Uttlesford will grow in line with the figures used for your recommendations, our model suggests that an electorate of 13,718 is a more realistic figure for the number of voters in Saffron Walden in 2018.

Based on an average of 1,774 voters per councillor, Saffron Walden should therefore be represented by eight district councillors rather than the seven suggested. Again, we would

like to emphasise that is entirely consistent with a local plan that places Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow as the main focus for population growth in the district.

We therefore reject the draft proposals and ask for the recommendations to be re-considered using more accurate and up-to-date data for the expected number of voters, that takes into account both the current size of the electorate in each ward as well as the likely number and location of new housing for the region until 2018 based on approved planning applications and the draft local plan and accompanying strategic housing land availability assessment.

Yours faithfully,



Matt North
WeAreResidents.org

