

Dear Sirs

On behalf of the Hertfordshire County Council Conservative Group, I offer the following comments on your further draft recommendations concerning the proposed Divisions in Stevenage.

First, I should record concerns expressed to me that this further period of consultation should have been during the run up to the General Election campaign when many of the community activists who tend to engage in such consultations are preoccupied with the election. In other circumstances, I suggest that more of them would have added to or amplified their earlier representations.

Having consulted colleagues who have a close understanding of community patterns in Stevenage, I submit that the Commission's initial draft representations better reflect community interests than do the further recommendations. In particular, I am told that the residents of Woodfield Ward and St Nicholas have little in common whereas the links between Woodfield and Old Stevenage are strong. I would ask you to revisit the submissions that led to your initial recommendations as I submit that they remain strong and, especially in the north and south of the town, outweigh the those by Labour Party interests that led to the further recommendations.

If, however, the Commission is minded to affirm its further recommendations, I would ask you to consider a relatively small adjustment that would better accommodate community patterns and improve variance from quota between the proposed St Nicholas (-6%) and Chells (-10%). This could be done by continuing the boundary east along Martins Way (rather than turning south down Verity Way) and then north up Wedgewood Way (as proposed), thereby transferring this area from St Nicholas to Chells. This would also avoid dividing the area bounded by Martins Way, Verity Way, Gresley Way and Fairlands Way which, among other shared interests, is served by Martins Wood Primary School and local allotments; resulting in a more convenient pattern of representation.

Sincerely

Robert Gordon

*Robert Gordon, CBE
Leader of the Council and of the Conservative Group
Hertfordshire County Council*