

## Local Boundary Review January 2013

We reject the proposal for 53 councillors for Herefordshire, believing that a council of at least 58 members is necessary in order to discharge its responsibilities. We believe that this proposal is an attack upon the integrity of Leominster which is the second largest urban constituency in the County.

The reduction proposed does not solve the overall issues of numbers as a reduction from 58 to 53 no material difference. If any change is made it should be substantial not marginal.

We do not accept that all wards should be single member. While agreeing that single wards make sense in rural areas, single wards do not make sense in Leominster. Some new wards proposed, particularly the Kimbolton/North Leominster ward, are formed of an ill fitting assortment of communities and parts of communities and lack clear identity.

Although the recommendations may meet one obligation, that of **delivering electoral equality for voters**, they do not deliver on the last two, namely **reflecting local community interests and identities**, and **promoting effective and convenient local government**.

Our particular concern is with Leominster Town, which is clearly divided into two two-member wards by the A44 which is a natural boundary division and has always functioned as a whole community. This arbitrary split into four single-member wards will do nothing to enhance, and will actively hinder local cohesion, a poor outcome for local democracy.

We are extremely disappointed that the representations and views of the ward councillors and the town councillors have been totally ignored. The current system works well in Leominster and should be left intact.

Furthermore, it has been noted that the proposed Kimbolton/North Leominster ward will combine the Ridgemoor area, one of the most deprived in the county, with five rural parishes with which it will have little in common and the rural parishes will feel totally isolated. It has further been suggested that this could make it difficult to access funding for social or education improvement for the Ridgemoor area.

To conclude, we believe it is important to keep the town of Leominster intact.

Iain Plumtree

Town Clerk

Leominster Town Council