

Starkie, Emily

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 May 2016 20:55
To: reviews
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Electoral review - East Sussex

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Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing on behalf of Plumpton Parish Council in reference to the proposed changes to East Sussex County Council and the revised ward boundaries.

We strongly oppose the proposal to create a new, single ward represented by one county councillor that stretches from Ditchling in the north west to Newhaven Valley in the south east. The main problem with the proposed ward is that it will be extremely large geographically, containing 11 parishes and Newhaven Town Council, and will be effectively separated by Lewes. Geographically, it is only linked via the South Downs.

On the ground, local issues and concerns can be very different between parishes to the west and south east of Lewes, who have very different concerns relating to their differing geography and populations.

We consider it more appropriate for our parish to be linked with neighbouring Wealden parishes such as Wivesfield and Chailey.

Our preference would be to retain the existing County council ward, which is geographically compact and contiguous, and can be reasonably served by one County councillor. It is important that there is good liaison between Parish, District and County councillors and it is hard to see how one County councillor could possibly attend all the meetings necessitated by this boundary reform, along with their obligations to other bodies, and in the case of Newhaven there are other meetings and matters to deal with such those relating to the Newhaven Economic Zone for instance. These are likely to take precedence over parish meetings and concerns.

While the proposals may look good on paper, and tidily meet the aims of the boundary reforms to create proportionate wards in terms of population, they do not reflect the realities of the lives of the people in the parishes concerned. We feel the Boundary Commission is either unaware of or not considering how Parish, District and County councillors work together for the good of the region and its inhabitants.

Yours faithfully

Cllr Catherine Jackson
Plumpton Parish Council