

The Review Officer
LGBCE
14th Floor, Millbank Tower
Millbank,
London SW1P 4QP

E-mail: Riddlesdownresidents@gmail.com
5 December 2016

Dear Sirs,

Local Government Boundary Review - London Borough of Croydon

The Riddlesdown Residents' Association (**RRA**) note the proposal for the LGBCE to publicly consult on proposals for an electoral review within the London Borough of Croydon.

Background and History

The comments and observations below are submitted by the RRA which covers an area, currently located in the Wards of Sanderstead (65%) and Purley (30%) and a small part within the Kenley Ward (5% on Riddlesdown Common only; no dwellings). We represent about 1,400 households within our area. The boundary of the RRA area can be viewed on this link to our website: <http://riddlesdownresidents.org.uk/therraarea.html>

Currently the RRA have to liaise on local matters, with three Councillors in the Sanderstead Ward and three Councillors in the Purley Ward. We are also currently represented by one MP (Croydon South) but if proposals regarding the Purley Ward are accepted, to amalgamate it with the Croydon Central Constituency, then in future we could have to liaise with two MPs.

Virtually all the housing in the whole of the RRA area was built by John Laing Ltd, just pre and post Second World War. Much of the wood and farmland, and the golf course surrounding Riddlesdown is Green Belt designated. However the Green Belt Act 1938 subsequently prevented further development on much of this land, by John Laing Ltd.

Riddlesdown is a thriving community. It has the largest secondary school in the Borough of Croydon (Riddlesdown Collegiate with 2,000 children plus 250 staff), a railway station, eleven retail frontages on two sites, a church, a large Common and adjoining Green Belt land, as mentioned above. The topography of Riddlesdown, with local infrastructure, makes it an important area within the Borough.

Suggested comments by the RRA

1. Croydon Council have promoted the 16 "Places of Croydon" within the CLP 1 document in the Croydon Local Plan (**see map below; Appendix 1**) that was published by the Council, just before Christmas 2015 and was subsequently consulted on again from September 2016. It therefore seems to make sense to the RRA that any new Council Wards should be within these same parameters. These new "Places" cover all the major "Villages" (as the Council's Refuse and Street Cleaning Department now refer to us, as) within the Borough. Each of the 16 "Places" can easily be sub divided to further attain the total number of 70 Councillors and be roughly in sync with most of the existing Residents Association areas in the Borough. If the future development of the Borough is going to be predicated upon these 16

“Place” areas, then it makes sense for Ward areas to reflect this geography.

2. Whilst the “16 Places of Croydon” are not perfect and perhaps over-simplify the communities in places, they have the advantage that they were arrived at outside of the very political atmosphere of a boundary review and have been widely consulted on. The Council’s own submission (on its website, GPA Committee agenda of 29 November 2016) seems very strange when compared to the “16 Places” it has adopted for planning purposes. There are a number of Wards in its own submission which straddle place borders and don’t seem to bear any resemblance to the places residents think they live in.
3. It is believed in the south of the Borough, the LGBCE should recognise Purley as a community and recognise that Coulsdon could be more effectively represented if the current 'Coulsdon West' is reduced in size close to Purley Town Centre (where many residents consider themselves to live in Purley anyway).
4. Purley could span an area that includes Woodcote/West Purley, Purley Town Centre, the Brighton Road from the point at which it leaves Coulsdon at Stoats Nest Road up to South Croydon past Purley Oaks, and eastwards to include Riddlesdown. The proposed, slightly amended Coulsdon West could be renamed 'Coulsdon Town' if it loses the 'Purley' area and could retain three councillors, while the new Purley boundaries would be enlarged to have five councillors, spilt into two wards - these could be called 'Purley and Woodcote' ward and 'Purley Town and the west and south side of Riddlesdown'. This would naturally require (due to the LGBCE population size ruling of 4,012 electorate) some Wards, such as the redrawn Kenley and Coulsdon East (which could be renamed 'Old Coulsdon') being two councillor wards, instead of three.
5. Sanderstead could remain a three Councillor Ward which is very similar to the area covered by Sanderstead RA and the old parish boundary. The Council’s proposal does chop off half of Sanderstead.
6. Ideally the RRA would like our area to be designated within one Ward. However, if this is not practical, then we would ask it is no more than two.
7. If the LGBCE are minded to proceed with the proposals submitted by Croydon Council, which incorporates most of the RRA area within a new “Sanderstead and Riddlesdown Ward,” then we would ask that the few streets shown just outside the RRA area are included. These streets are;
 - a) the west side of Riddlesdown Road from the junction of Mitchley Ave leading up to Riddlesdown Common; Nos 154 – 188.
 - b) Downs Court Road, both sides; Nos 84 to 108 & 97 to 133.
 - c) Cranford Close

We hope the LGBC take on board the above comments.

Yours faithfully

Brian Longman and Phil Thomas

Brian Longman (Chairman, RRA)

Phil Thomas MRICS (Planning & Environmental Committee Member, RRA)

Appendix 1 – The 16 Places of Croydon

The Places of Croydon

