

Hinchley Wood Residents Association response to the 2023 review of Surrey electoral divisions, as submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission

Our Association represents the interests of Hinchley Wood and Weston Green ward in Elmbridge Borough Council. Candidates sponsored by our Association in Borough Council elections are consistently returned with large majorities to serve on that council. We are confident that we speak for the great majority of local residents in opposing the changes proposed in the second consultation to Surrey divisional boundaries, as they affect our and neighbouring communities.

We did not comment on the initial consultation as it proposed minimal changes to the existing boundaries and grouping of communities for Surrey electoral purposes. The current arrangements, under which Hinchley Wood is grouped with Claygate and Oxshott, work well, and we see no reason to change them. We note that a similar view appears to have been taken by Surrey County Council, as they put forward only very minor changes in their initial submission to the review.

The proposals set out in this second consultation appear to be based on the response of Liberal Democrats in Elmbridge to the initial consultation. We are surprised that the Commission appear to have accepted without question proposals from a single political party. Contrary to the assertion in the Liberal Democrat document, their proposals are far from respecting local community links and views.

The justification put forward for the radical changes they propose is very thin, and they themselves acknowledge that they do nothing to address disparities in the sizes of Divisions. The proposals do not in the least respect community identity and interests, and there is no evidence that they would promote more effective and convenient local government.

We therefore strongly urge the Commission to reject these proposals as far as they concern Hinchley Wood and neighbouring communities, and to revert to the proposals in the initial consultation.

October 2023