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From: [REDACTED]
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To: reviews
Subject: Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Boundary Review
Attachments: Submission to retain and expand Judd Ward- Cllr Mark Hood.pdf; Judd Data.png

Categories: [REDACTED]

The case for retaining and enlarging Judd Ward to include parts of Castle South and Medway South

As one of the Borough Councillors for Judd Ward I propose that Judd Ward be conserved and extended to include the whole of Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground which is used by our residents in Judd and Castle South.

The current Judd Ward is a self-contained geographical area neatly grouped into three interconnected communities linked by Sussex Road School and to a lesser extent Slade School so dividing it in any rearrangement is completely unacceptable.

Judd Ward is currently linked by a comprehensive network of footpaths and served by three arterial roads, Barden Road, Brook Street/Upper Haysden Lane and Waterloo Road/Douglas Road. This is an overwhelmingly residential community is within the Parish of St Stephen's Church which sits in the middle of the ward which has a preschool used by many residents.

There are several community groups across Judd including the Barden Residents Association which has over 500 members and another around Molescroft Way and more have been created in the past two years for Meadow Lawn and the Molescroft and Brook St Estate. The Slade has a very active Residents Association too. All the parts of this expanded Judd Ward will send their children to Sussex Road and Slade Schools which are also centrally located and are an important part of the fabric of these communities.

Of all the Wards in Tonbridge Judd is the most cohesive as demonstrated when preparing for the challenges of Covid 19. The Judd Ward Support Group organised a volunteer for every road. If the ward had to be extended the most practical additions would be the properties to the north of the Botany Stream extending across the Big Bridge and the properties to the west of the High Street and including the Slade and all properties south of London Road.

In addition I would extend the ward to the areas around the various channels of the River Medway including the Botany Stream and the flats at Waterside Reach and the apartments either side of the Medway from the Big Bridge to Cannon Lane. The communities in Barden, Meadow Lawn, The Molescroft Estate and along Brook

Street/Haysden are well established and cohesive. The proposed additional communities in the Slade and Lyons Crescent/Mill Crescent also have established community organisations including the Slade Area Residents Association so they are a natural fit. The areas at greatest risk of flooding in Tonbridge are almost all in the same ward as they would include the developments at Town Lock and Blossom Bank which match the flats in Barden along Avebury Avenue more than any other area in other proposed wards, The blocks of apartments all have their own community Facebook Pages so we have a rich swathe of Tonbridge with strong interconnected issues and strong identities. More so than any other existing or proposed ward.

We have been working hard to instil an even greater sense of community in the current Judd Ward which already contains the schools, services, shops and recreation areas which are predominantly used by that community. Adding Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground and the Slade Community which is very similar to the community around Barden Road and Douglas Road would enable the existing ward to remain and including all the communities which use this as their primary recreation space.

The increased number of voters in this new ward would make it necessary to have three councillors rather than two. The alternative would be a two member ward for Judd and the Slade and a one member ward for the part of Medway Ward identified which is not a cohesive part of the current ward due to its distance from the community in Medway South on the other side of the industrial estate and Paddock Wood railway line.

Almost the entire footprint of the proposed Judd Ward close to the River Medway or in low lying areas is flood-threatened and tackling this issue and finding mitigation measures where possible will be addressed more pragmatically if all affected communities are in one ward represented by the same councillors.

Bringing the whole central retail area into one ward rather than having it split between three wards by the High Street and River Medway makes perfect sense. There are so many crossing points across the branches of the river that it is not a significant barrier between communities and has never been previously been treated as such by boundary reviews.

The suggestion that Judd should be combined with Vauxhall Ward makes every little sense as that community is well defined already and there are very few geographical similarities with this ward which is located along the slopes leading up to the sandstone of the High Weald.

Kind regards

Mark Hood

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councillor for Judd Ward

New Judd							
	TJA	Judd Central (Meadow Lawn)	1223	1302			
	TJB	Judd North (Barden)	1363	1419			
	TJC	Judd South (Molescroft)	1342	1416			
	TLA	Medway North	2902	3065			
	TCB	Castle South	1465	1585			
Less:	TCB	Hilden Park East	-565	-612			
Less:	TCB	Portman Park	-105	-113			
Less:	TLA	Hadlow Rd in Medway	-486	-514			
Total Electors			7139	7548			
No of councillors			3	6705	7284	6.5%	3.6%