

## Wychavon District Council

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### Comment text:

Please note the following response attached from Little Comberton Parish Council.

### Uploaded Documents:

**Download ([https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download\\_document?file=draft%2F1659442779+Boundary+Commission+-+formal+response+from+Little+Comberton+Parish+Council+to+revised+proposals+August+2022.pdf](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1659442779+Boundary+Commission+-+formal+response+from+Little+Comberton+Parish+Council+to+revised+proposals+August+2022.pdf))**

## **Response to revised draft recommendations to Wychavon District Council's Ward Boundary changes - Little Comberton Parish Council**

We welcome acknowledgement in the Boundary Commission Review of the important value in keeping Great Comberton, Little Comberton, Elmley Castle, Bricklehampton and Netherton together in the same electoral ward. However, we note that this has only been partially achieved by a new proposal of putting both Combertons together in a ward with Fladbury; and a new proposal to put Elmley, Bricklehampton and Netherton together in a ward with Childswickham. We note that this division has been made chiefly on the basis of electoral numbers within those different proposed wards.

We strongly urge the Boundary Commission to further revise its proposals. We believe it is critical that in electing a local constituency representative, we have the needs and interests of the local community kept in focus. For this purpose, the boundaries should prioritise shared community identity and interests. In this respect the Combertons do not share the same local shared community identity and interests with the Fladbury Ward, and Elmley Castle and Bricklehampton do not share the same shared community identity and interests with the Childswickham ward.

In our original submission, we stressed the strong community links across the Combertons and Elmley Castle, and we re-iterate this again here to emphasise the depth and breadth of the shared interests. The three parishes are all on the north flank of Bredon Hill on the edge of the Cotswolds AONB, experiencing similar challenges in terms of planning and development pressures, traffic and transport issues, sensitive landscape considerations, flooding and land drainage management. The villages have been very closely linked both socially and historically for many decades; Elmley Castle First School is a focus for nursery and primary education, the community pub in Elmley Castle is actively supported by volunteers and shareholders from the Combertons, the same applies to the Cricket Club and the Elmley Beaver and Cub group, as well as two local choirs. The villages are also all part of the Elmley Castle Parochial Church benefice.

In addition, the residents of the three villages have strong social connections with a shared sense of identity, this manifests itself in joint working on charity events and fundraising, supporting village initiatives and general good neighbourliness. This is evidenced by the Elmley, Bricklehampton & The Combertons Parish Notice Board on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ElmleyBrickleCombertons/>) and by The Link publication which promotes village events and initiatives from across the three parishes, see <https://www.little-comberton.com/thelinkmagazine>. Furthermore, there is a longstanding history of supportive and collaborative working amongst the parish councils of Little and Great Comberton and Elmley Castle on a range of issues, from responding to contentious and significant planning applications on the edge of the AONB, to addressing speeding traffic concerns on the roads linking the villages around Bredon Hill, issues that have frequently been championed by the Ward Councillor.

We believe that it is possible to keep Great Comberton, Little Comberton, Elmley Castle, Bricklehampton and Netherton together in one ward and achieve both a more appropriate representation of our specific local priorities, whilst ALSO ending up with a ward of the appropriate size relative to neighbouring wards.

Looking at the proposed neighbouring wards and with our own strong understanding of the local communities, we would suggest that the Elmley Castle and Childswickham Ward covers too wide an area in the current proposals. Some villages such as Childswickham and Murcot are much more associated in location, identity and interests with Broadway. Others such as Wickhamford are much more associated in location, identity and interests with Badsey and Aldington. By redistributing these villages, this should provide scope to keep our own very strong community together, as one, whilst also maintaining parity in electoral numbers for these local wards.