

Northumberland

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (District or county councillor)

Comment text:

Related subject: Choppington Electoral Division

As the local councillor for Choppington, I am keen to comment on the proposal to add a significant proportion of the current Hepscott village to this electoral division. I have spoken to Choppington Parish Council clerks as well as Hepscott Parish Clerk and many local people in coming to my view.

My major concern over joining these two communities electorally, is that they have absolutely nothing in common with each other. Choppington contains several council housing estates, ex mining terraces as well as moderately priced private housing. Aside from South Fields, which is the part of Hepscott parish which you plan to move to Morpeth Stobhill, the village of Hepscott is a place where only the very well to do and the seriously wealthy can afford to live. It is known locally as millionaires row and is seen in the same way as Darras Hall, a wealthy suburb in Ponteland. The people of Hepscott do not use the schools in Choppington, and although I cannot say for certain they do not use our shops, I very much doubt they do as we do not have any major supermarkets in the Ward. The communities are as different as chalk and cheese and are a fair distance apart. I have never seen a bus go through Hepscott, and I doubt they are on a public transport network. I am sure the people are lovely, but they have little in common with my residents. The average house price in Choppington last year was 140,000. In Hepscott it was 640,000. I would argue the Hepscott figure is this low because of South Fields being in their patch currently. Take South Fields away and I am sure the price would be nearer 1 million pounds.

This has an impact on Choppington in terms of our stats being skewed. Our average house price will shoot up, our average household income will shoot and our age and health stats will be affected. This may affect my residents access to government and or Local Authority funding pots in the future. I cannot imagine two more disparate communities being placed together in this whole county. I suspect the people of Hepscott would

prefer to be in a Morpeth Ward than Choppington.
I would be grateful for your consideration of the issues I have raised.

Attached Documents:

None attached