

Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Boundary Review for Tandridge District – Draft Recommendations (May 2023)

Comments

Lack of Balance Between the North and South of the District

Tandridge District Council (TDC) was formed in 1974 by the amalgamation of Caterham & Warlingham Urban District Council and Godstone Rural District Council. The two parts of Tandridge District remain quite distinctive. Each is affected by a different range of issues and opportunities. It is important that these two areas are equitably represented on TDC.

Currently, the North of the District (Caterham and Warlingham and surrounding areas, broadly the area of the former UDC) is represented by 19 District Councillors (DCllrs) and the South (the Oxted area and the southern villages and rural areas, plus Tatsfield and Titsey, broadly the area of the former RDC) by 23 DCllrs.

The Commission's current Recommendations propose that the North of the District should be represented on Tandridge District Council (TDC) by 18 DCllrs, and the South of the District by 24 DCllrs.

The Table of Recommendations (Report, pp 34-35) shows that all of the Wards in the North of the District (Nos. 9 - 15) would have more than the average number of electors for each DCllr, while all but one of the Wards in the South of the District (Nos. 1 - 8) would have fewer than the average number of electors for each DCllr.

The table gives the average number of electors per DCllrs across the District in 2022 as 1,559. The total electorate for Wards 9 - 15 is 29,647, an average of 1,647 electors for each Councillor. The total electorate for Wards 1 - 8 is 35,814, an average of 1,492 electors for each Councillor. The estimated figures for 2028 in the table show a similar imbalance.

Adding an extra DCllr to the North of the District (Wards 9 - 15) and subtracting one from the South (Wards 1 - 8) would restore the balance of representation between these two areas, with 1,560 electors per DCllr in the North and 1,557 electors per DCllr in the South (2022 figures).

The Commission is asked to restore fair representation to the North of the District.

Failure to Respect Community and Parish Boundaries

The Commission has proposed that, wherever practicable, District Councils where 'retirement is in thirds' should have 'three-seat' Wards. For the North West part of Tandridge (Chaldon, Caterham-on-the-Hill, Caterham Valley and Whyteleafe), this has led to

recommendations for Wards which cut across Parish boundaries. In some instances – particularly the proposed Portley-Whyteleafe Ward, the combination of Chaldon with Westway rather than Queens Park and the addition of part of Caterham Valley to Queens Park Ward – the results are inappropriate. The new Wards would not be understood by residents as they would be unrelated to natural community areas. In contrast, Parish areas are widely understood and should always be used as the basis for Ward boundaries unless the electorate numbers require otherwise.

Three-seat Wards do not fit within this part of the District. If the choice has to be between three-seat wards and 'all-out' elections every four years, then the latter would be a reluctant preference. However, the present system of one-seat, two-seat and three-seat Wards seems the best for Tandridge as a whole, as is recommended for Woldingham and part of Warlingham.

For North West Tandridge, the Commission is asked to give priority to natural community boundaries and to restore Wards based as far as possible on Parish areas.

Tandridge

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Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Whole District and Caterham Area

Lack of Balance Between the North and South of the District; and
Failure to Respect Community and Parish Boundaries in the Caterham area.
Please see attached Word document for details. Many thanks.

Attached Documents:

- LGCBE Report Comment.docx